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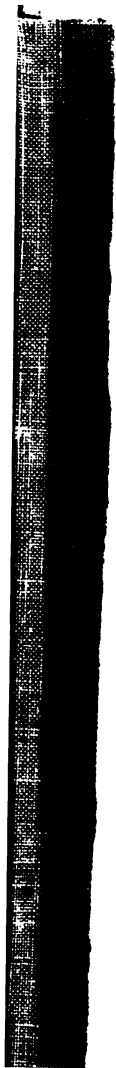
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**GERMAN PHILOSOPHICAL CLASSICS**

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**EDITED BY**

**GEORGE S. MORRIS.**

—

**HEGEL'S ÆSTHETICS.**

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# HEGEL'S ÆSTHETICS.

//

A CRITICAL EXPOSITION.

By JOHN STEINFORT KEDNEY, S.T.D.

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## PREFACE.

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THE *Æsthetics* of Hegel is a voluminous treatise, and more easy of comprehension than any other of his works. Its appearance began a new era in Art criticism, and it has been the mine from which many subsequent writers have drawn their treasures. To read it intelligently will open new vistas and make possible new enjoyment for any cultured reader. The object of the present book is, without transferring its multitudinous details, or giving what can be readily found elsewhere, to reproduce its essential thought, especially from the philosophic standpoint. Some endeavor to master the key, viz., Hegel's philosophy of the Idea, is needful for its complete application in following his treatment of the several Arts.

The work is divided into three parts. The *first*, which gives the fundamental philosophy of the whole, is here reproduced faithfully, though in a condensed form, with criticisms of the present author interspersed. Of the *second* part, which traces the logical and historical development of the Art-impulse, there is an excellent translation easily accessible.\* I have thought it best, therefore, to substitute,

\* The Philosophy of Art; being the second part of Hegel's *Æsthetik*. By Wm. M. Bryant. New York: D. Appleton and Co.

here, an original disquisition, in language approaching nearer the vernacular, and with more immediate regard to present Æsthetic problems; yet following also the pathway marked out by Hegel, and giving the substance of his thought. Of the *third* part, which is larger than both the others combined, being the treatment of all the Arts in detail, I have given all the important definitions and fundamental ideas, omitting, as was needful, the minute illustrations of the same, and the properly technical part, which, too, can be found elsewhere.

As I would not have my own thought mistaken for Hegel's, I have taken the liberty, wherever there are critical remarks of my own interposed, not obviously such from the text, or entirely original passages, to enclose them in brackets, thus: [ ]

J. STEINFORT KEDNEY.

*November, 1884.*



# CONTENTS.

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## PART I.

### THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE MEANING AND PURPOSE OF ART.

Art not a mere recreation, nor a means of moral instruction . . . . .	1
It can be scientifically treated, but worthily and satisfactorily, only by the <i>a priori</i> method . .	6
Critique of the assertion that it is superior to Nature . . . . .	8
The sensible element in a work of Art . . . .	11
The same in the Artist . . . . .	13
Art not the imitation of Nature . . . . .	15
Critique of the assertion that there is no criterion by which to judge of the degree of Beauty in natural objects . . . . .	16
Art not simply a means of improving manners	19
Its true mission to discover and represent the Ideal . . . . .	20
The Kantian Æsthetic, and its signification . .	22
Critique to claim that the Beautiful in Nature should be first exhaustively treated, before inquiring into the Beautiful in Art . . . .	25

## CHAPTER II.

## BEAUTY IN ITS ABSTRACT IDEA.

Definition of the primitive idea ( <i>Begriff</i> ), and of the true Idea ( <i>Idee</i> ) . . . . .	26
The Beautiful the sensible manifestation of the same . . . . .	27
Stages in the evolution of the Idea, in the inor- ganic world, and in the ascending series of organisms . . . . .	29
Critique to show that the grades of admitted Beauty do not accurately follow this evolu- tion . . . . .	32
Enumeration of <i>facts</i> concerning the Beautiful in Nature . . . . .	33
Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the Idea . .	33

## CHAPTER III.

## BEAUTY IN THE CONCRETE.

Regularity, symmetry, conformity to law, and harmony, constituents of the Beautiful in its lowest forms . . . . .	39
Imperfection of all natural Beauty discussed at length, in order to show the need of the Ideal . . . . .	42
Critique of the above, and further explication of the Philosophy of the Idea . . . . .	46
Ground of the disagreement in subjective judg- ments of the Beautiful in Nature and in Art . . . . .	52

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE IDEAL IN ART.

Art discards in Nature whatever is not suitable for its purpose, and thereby finds a higher truth . . . . .	53
The Divine in its free serenity one result of its scrutiny and discovery . . . . .	55
The Ideal as given in the human form not abstract, but requires particularization . . . .	57

## CHAPTER V.

## THE REALIZATION OF THE IDEAL.

The particularization of the Divine in the Greek divinities, and in heroic men . . . . .	60
Hence the need of the heroic age as the scene for the representations of the Ideal . . . .	63
Modern civilized life not so suitable . . . .	65
The various <i>situations</i> proper for artistic treatment . . . . .	66
What is represented in High Art is the eternal powers of the universe which furnish the motives for human action, and which in themselves are <i>good</i> . . . . .	68
Pure evil inadmissible in Art . . . . .	69
The Divine should be represented not as aloof from, but as intimate with, men and human affairs . . . . .	71
Distinction of Passion and Pathos . . . .	74
The characters in Art must not be mere abstractions . . . . .	77

The external element in works of Art must conform to the requirements of Beauty . . .	80
The external element in Art may be either an internal bond, as in Lyric Poetry, or, if objective, must have close and immediate relation with man, as in the heroic age . . . .	85

## CHAPTER VI.

## ART IN RELATION TO THE PUBLIC.

Contrast of the subjective mode of treatment which adapts itself to present comprehension, with the objective mode which aims only to be faithful to the historic requirements, to show that a union of the two is needful . . .	91
Some anachronisms are thus allowable . . .	96

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE ARTIST.

Definition of the artistic Imagination as needed to constitute <i>genius</i> in Art . . . .	100
Critique of the same, to discover the distinction between <i>genius</i> and talent . . . .	104
Definition of Inspiration . . . .	108
Artistic work may be spontaneous, or may have a fixed theme given beforehand . . . .	109
<i>Originality</i> showing itself in manner and in style . . . . .	111

## PART II.

## THE ART-IMPULSE IN ITS DEVELOPMENT.

## CHAPTER I.

## CLASSIFICATIONS.

Different aims of disquisitions on Art . . .	114
The subjective or changeable element in Art-appreciation should be distinguished from the objective or universal one . . . . .	115
Different classifications of the Arts, (1) according to the material elements of the same . . . .	119
(2) Hegel's Classification into Symbolic, Classic and Romantic Arts is the true dialectic order, and in some sense the chronological one . .	122

## CHAPTER II.

## THE SYMBOLIC PERIOD.

Analysis of the early Philosophic and Religious consciousness, which from its vagueness finds itself obliged to use Symbols in its Artistic Representations . . . . .	126
---	-----

## CHAPTER III.

## THE CLASSIC PERIOD.

A clearer human consciousness brings about the Classic period, and the perfection of its Artistic work . . . . .	132
The idea of the divine becomes representable in the human form . . . . .	136

But the elements of the Classic Ideal are found to be self-destructive; and Art, notwithstanding its triumph, cannot linger in this period . . .	137
Unconscious purity of the true Æsthetic instinct . . .	142

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ROMANTIC PERIOD.

This is brought about by a radical change in human consciousness . . . . .	145
The pure principle of subjectivity sets the external world, and even itself, in a different relation, makes it independent, and returns to it with dominating power; which makes possible a larger and freer treatment of the same . . .	146
Different aims for Romantic Art . . . . .	149

## CHAPTER V.

### THE TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL IDEALS.

Extended examination of two pictures, Correggio's St. Sebastian and Raphael's Madonna di San Sisto, in order to discover the Ideals on which their differing Beauty depends . . .	152
Claim that thus is furnished a Higher Criticism than that which judges the worth of a work of Art by any lower criterion . . . . .	160
Dependence of Art Criticism on Philosophy. Inadequacy of the scheme of Materialistic Evolution to account for appreciation of Beauty in the highest grade . . . . .	163

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE SUBLIME AND THE PATHETIC IN ART.

<i>Résumé</i> of the explanation of the Romantic Ideal in order to discover the place for the Pathetic and the Sublime . . . . .	170
Romantic Art may aim, (1) to give the highest ideal Beauty in Symbol; (2) to deal with nature and human life according to subjective caprice, or (3) to exhibit the characteristics of the conflict of the real and the ideal in the transit. This last the region of the Pathetic and the Sublime . . . . .	173
Distinction of the Pathos in Classic and Romantic Art . . . . .	177
Adaptation of the different Arts to represent the Sublime and the Pathetic . . . . .	180

## PART III.

## THE SYSTEM OF THE DIFFERENT ARTS.

## CHAPTER I.

## STYLES; CLASSIFICATION.

The Styles, severe, ideal and graceful . . . .	182
Rejection of previous modes of classification, and adoption of his own, as alone philosophic, which obliges treatment in the following order . . . . .	185
Critique of the definition of Poetry, which makes it independent of <i>sound</i> . . . . .	187



## CHAPTER II.

## ARCHITECTURE.

- It becomes an Art when the Useful is transcended, and the Beautiful is sought; and its earliest efforts, when more than imitations, are Symbolic. Enumeration of monuments of this order, viz.: Architecture purely independent . . . . . 190
- When dependent, or subordinate to purpose, we have Classic Architecture. The characteristics of the same, as in the Greek temple . . . 195
- Romantic Architecture combines the two, as in the Gothic cathedral . . . . . 198

## CHAPTER III.

## SCULPTURE.

- Wherein superior and wherein inferior to the other Arts . . . . . 201
- The human body, being a higher stage in the development of the Idea than what has gone before, and revealing true spirituality, constitutes the Ideal of Sculpture . . . . . 204
- Critique of Hegel's Anthropology . . . . . 207
- Sculpture disregards physiognomy . . . . . 208
- The perception of the Plastic Ideal of its Sculpture necessary to the right understanding of *all* Greek Art . . . . . 209
- Various characteristics and excellences of Greek Sculpture. Its treatment of the eye, the mouth, and the attitude . . . . . 210

The nude and the draped. Vindication of the latter . . . . .	214
Historic Development of Sculpture. Modern Sculpture . . . . .	217

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE ROMANTIC ARTS.

Philosophic <i>résumé</i> of the development of the Art-impulse in order to show that Painting, Music and Poetry belong to its higher stage .	222
---	-----

## CHAPTER V.

## PAINTING.

Comparison with the other Arts, and why Romantic Art, inferior in Sculpture, is superior in Painting . . . . .	228
The physical element of this Art space in two dimensions, or more properly, <i>Light</i> . . . .	231
Subjects proper for this Art different from those of Sculpture . . . . .	234
On the one hand, the Divine, religious love .	235
On the other hand, Nature and the Beautiful, though transitory, in human affairs . . .	238
Modes of conception, composition and characterization . . . . .	239

## CHAPTER VI.

## MUSIC.

Its element, movement, time, sound . . . .	245
Analogies with the other Arts . . . . .	247

Its mode of conception different, since it aims to give, not precise thought, but sentiment . . .	251
As under mathematical laws it is the most closely bound of all the Arts; yet otherwise the freest . . . . .	254
Psychological needs of measure, cadence and rhythm . . . . .	255
Harmony and Melody. The latter shows its freedom . . . . .	257
Music as accompaniment, and pure Music . . .	258
Benefit of a determined theme, both in composition and appreciation . . . . .	260
Musical execution, faithful or free . . . .	262

## CHAPTER VII.

## POETRY.

Its superiority to the other Arts . . . . .	263
The poetic mode of conception, and critique of the same . . . . .	264
Poetry more ancient than fashioned prose . . .	267
This Art favored more or less, and determined by different epochs and rationalities . . .	269
The unity of a poetic work requires perfection in the individual parts as well as in the totality . . . . .	270
History and Oratory, when and how poetic . . .	271
Distinctive character of poetic genius . . .	272
Difference in the prosaic and poetic modes of conceiving the same object or event. Comparisons . . . . .	273

## CHAPTER VIII.

## EPIC POETRY.

Its basis is some independent and complete fact.	
Epigrams, etc., have the Epic character . . .	276
The true Epos is an action developed completely, and in a calm and leisurely manner . . .	278
The heroic age only is well suited for it . . .	279
The Idyll and the Romance have the Epic character . . . . .	281

## CHAPTER IX.

## LYRIC POETRY.

This is distinguished by its subjectivity . . .	282
It belongs to a more advanced stage of society than the Epic . . . . .	283
It is more dependent than any other form on the peculiarities of time, place, people, history, etc. . . . .	285

## CHAPTER X.

## DRAMATIC POETRY.

The Drama has its interest from the <i>collisions</i> occurring between its characters . . .	287
Hence its subject must not be a physical, but a <i>moral action</i> . . . . .	288
Its diction need not be purely natural . . .	289
In the Greek Dramas, the principal characters represent legitimate principles, and are in themselves <i>good</i> . But in the concrete their judgments may disagree, hence collisions . . .	290

Here we find anticipated the results of Ethical inquiry . . . . .	291
In the <i>dénouement</i> , these differences are harmonized. Eternal justice destroys in the Tragedy what was maintaining itself, mistakenly, against it. In the Comedy, the different subjectivities fall back again upon their own serene independence . . . . .	292
Different epochs or peoples are more or less favorable for Dramatic Poetry . . . . .	294
Signification of the Chorus, in the Greek Dramas	295
In the <i>dénouement</i> of ancient Tragedy the moral mind is left satisfied . . . . .	297
In Modern Tragedy this is only partially accomplished . . . . .	298
Excellence of Shakespeare's characters . . . . .	299
Conclusion . . . . .	301

# HEGEL'S ÆSTHETICS.

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## PART I.

### THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE MEANING AND PURPOSE OF ART.

ÆSTHETIC has for its object the vast empire of the Beautiful, and hence includes the philosophy of Art in general, and of each Fine-Art in particular. This last is Hegel's topic; and some may think the attention he bestows upon the preliminary inquiry to be insufficient; for in the order of thought, an analysis of the emotions of the Beautiful and the Sublime, and the establishment of the objectivity of Beauty, should precede any philosophy of Art, since the artistic impulse itself presupposes Beauty and the delight in it, and any imperfection here may affect the whole subsequent treatment. What attention Hegel does bestow upon these fundamental questions will be exhibited farther on. But Art being his topic, he proceeds, at the start, to vindicate his treatment of it, and asks the question whether it can be treated scientifically. Without doubt, he

says, it embellishes our existence and charms our leisure, but it seems foreign to the serious end of human life. Is it anything more than a recreation for the mind, and a luxury which may be indulged in so far as to prejudice the true interests of active life? Those who defend it contend that it does afford, even in the practical and moral life, more benefit than detriment. Some have given it an immediately serious and moral purpose, and made it a mediating principle between the reason and sensibility, between inclination and duty, having for its mission to conciliate the elements which contend in the human soul. But reason and duty have nothing to gain by this attempt after conciliation. Moral obligation is simple, direct and pure, needs no external aid, and by such conciliation loses its purity and its force. Nor is Art any object for science, properly speaking. It cannot be submitted to its rigorous methods. It addresses the sensibility and the imagination, and not the reflective faculty. The enjoyment of it is not increased by analysis. That enjoyment. That which delights us in it. . . of freedom manifest in its creations. . . we love to escape for the moment from the yoke of laws, to quit the realm of abstract ideas, and inhabit a region more serene and full of life. Science would lose its labor did it undertake to embrace in its formulas the infinite multitude of actual and possible artistic representations. The world of science is the world of regularity and necessity: the world of imagination is the world of the irregular and the arbitrary. The crea-



tive imagination is freer and richer than nature itself.

[There is room for question whether nature, as the domain of science, is rightly regarded as necessary and not free. Its laws, or ascertained modes, are reducible to unity; and science shows us nature in movement. That the essential principle of its unity, and of its movement and progress, is not necessity, but freedom, is indicated by *Æsthetic* itself, so far as it is a philosophy. Physical beauty could have no explanation were not the principle of freedom discoverable in nature. If so, it cannot rightly be said that the creative imagination is freer and richer than nature. All possible artistic activity cannot rival the superabundance of ideas in concrete nature, whose multitudinous implications science itself is revealing. Philosophy, too, may come to regard nature as fluent and not fixed, and that it is always what it is by virtue of its relation to the spiritual subject. The question, in final terms, is, whether freedom is simply an appearance thrown up in the stern onward march of necessary physical development, or whether any necessity is other than the orderliness of the free spirit of the universe, limiting its play and discovering its modes in order to be comprehensible to finite minds, yet here and there showing that it is not herein exhausted, but has an infinite world of possibilities in reserve.

It is not to be understood by this that the ordinary scientific regard of nature is Hegel's view, which appears quite other in his *Natur-philosophie*; but

that he seems, for his present purpose, to have been led to an acquiescence in phrase with the mechanical view of many scientists, by the immediate need to vindicate for Art a freer and higher movement than nature's own. In this present work he has not clearly applied his own philosophy of nature to the explanation of natural Beauty.]

If Art be regarded simply as an ornament, or a means of enjoyment, it is so far enslaved to subjective whims. It is only when freed from external constraint that it becomes truth itself and can give the fullest satisfaction. Its high destination is to express the profoundest interests of human nature, and the most comprehensive truths of the spirit. It is in their works of Art that the peoples have deposited their most intimate ideas and their richest intuitions. Their Art often furnishes the key to unlock the secrets of their wisdom and the mysteries of their religion. As to the reproach that Art produces its effect by appearance and illusion, it is pointless, since nature itself is but appearance, and human actions likewise; yet it is from these that we judge of the verity of things. It is precisely the action and development of the universal force, which shows itself in nature and in humanity, that is the object of the representations of Art. This, indeed, is to be found in the real world, but confounded with the chaos of particular interests and transitory circumstances, and mingled with arbitrary human volitions. Art undertakes to disengage the truth from these illusory forms of the gross and imperfect world,

in order to clothe it in a form more elevated and pure, created by the mind itself. Thus its forms may enclose more of truth than the phenomenal existences of the real world. But, if we give to Art a rank so elevated, we must not forget that it is not, either by its content or its form, the highest manifestation, the last and absolute expression, by which the True is revealed to the mind. Since it is obliged to clothe its conceptions in sensible form, its circle is limited; it can attain only a certain degree of truth. Without doubt it is the destiny even of truth to be developed under a sensible form, and thereby it furnishes Art with its purest type, as in the representation of the Greek divinities. But there is a still profounder manner of comprehending truth, where it escapes all alliance with the sensible, as no longer competent to contain it or express it. It is thus that Christianity has conceived it; and it is thus that the modern philosophic mind has transcended the mode which Art employs to represent the Absolute. In our day, thought has overflowed the Fine Arts. In our judgments and our acts we are governed by abstract principles and general rules, and the artist himself cannot escape their influence. He can no longer abstract himself from the world in which he lives, and create a solitude which permits him to resuscitate Art in its primitive simplicity. Thus Art, with its high destination, is something belonging to the past. It has measurably lost for us its truth and its life. We consider it in a manner too speculative to allow it to exercise that influence upon manners that

it did in other times. We reason upon our impressions and enjoyments, and works of Art become more and more matters for criticism.

Here and elsewhere Hegel shows himself somewhat despondent about the future of Art. Something will be said upon this very interesting question in what follows.

But while Art and Science are different modes of dealing with the True, and Art refuses to be the object of science, yet it can be scientifically treated, for it has its own conditions and its rules, which can be formulated; and it has a history, showing that its development has followed necessary laws.

In this inquiry two methods can be followed, quite distinct: the one, the empirical and historic method, preceded by the study of the productions of Art in their chronological order; the other, altogether rational and *a priori*, starting immediately with the general idea of the Beautiful, and the abstract philosophy of the same.

The first of these methods exacts an intimate knowledge of the products of Art, both ancient and modern; of manners and institutions; and a very delicate judgment and lively imagination are required to compare objects so separate in time and distance. But by this method certain general conceptions have been formed and coördinated, furnishing, thus, principles of criticism, and, considered externally, theories about the Arts. But these, though instructive in details, rest upon too narrow a basis. The range of works whence these general rules are

drawn by Aristotle, Horace, and Longinus, is too limited, and the theories lack fixed principles serving as guides for the examination. The field is left open for disputes that there seems no way of settling. To find permanent satisfaction for the mind, the question must be examined more deeply, to find, if possible, what Art is in itself, and what is the law of its history.

The second method may be said to have been founded by Plato, in his endeavor to find by pure thinking the idea of the Beautiful, as of the True and the Good. But the Platonic abstraction is not sufficient to satisfy our modern philosophic needs. We must attempt to reunite, in the idea of the Beautiful, its metaphysical generality and its particular concrete side, and to show, that from its very essence it did and must develop itself objectively, in a series of successive historic forms, agreeing with the necessary order of thought. Art, being then the outcome of an anterior principle, no other than Beauty in itself, what is *this* in its essential nature? [And here, when we expectantly ask for a reply to this question, we are told by Hegel that it is a task not to be undertaken here, but which belongs to the encyclopedic exposition of philosophy entire. This question does indeed belong to the ultimate constructive philosophy, but some result must have been reached as the starting-point of the present inquiry. The hiatus is painful, and for the present is leaped over; though, later on, our author returns with some attempts to bridge it.]

Art, as the product of the creative activity of man, cannot be taught except in its technical rules, for its interior and living part is the result of the spontaneous activity of the genius of the artist. The mind draws from its own abysses the rich treasure of ideas and of forms. But we cannot say that the artist, because he finds himself in a unique condition of the soul,—that is to say, Inspiration—is not self-conscious in what he does, for whatever be the gifts of nature, reflection and experience are needed for their development.

The opinion has been uttered that the works of Art are inferior to the works of Nature, because the works of man are inanimate, while these are organized and living; because in Art the life is only upon the surface, while the substance is only wood, stone, words, etc. But indeed this dead stuff is not the material with which Art deals. What it creates upon or within it belongs to the domain of the spirit, and is living as it is. And in a circumstance, a character, or the development of an action, what interests us Art seizes hold of and makes to reissue in a manner more living, purer and clearer than we find it in the objects of nature or the facts of real life; and this is why the creations of Art are higher than those of Nature. No real existence expresses the ideal as Art does. Thus the human mind is able to give to that which it draws out of itself a perpetuity that the perishable existences of nature do not possess.

[This is true, but there are qualifications which



limit the comprehension of these utterances. Man, by observation, finds out Nature's ideal, what she would be at, but rarely or never perfectly expresses, in this world of contradiction, where the physical elements are hostile and where the moral conflict rages; but this ideal may remain a purely subjective impression, and, though never made real in a work of Art, be truer than when objectified in the imperfect work of the artist. In giving the perfection of *form*, Art exceeds Nature, and gives us the more perfect tree or the more beautiful body than the real world ever supplies, and thus perpetuates Nature's ideal. In the mystery of color, in its subtle gradations and harmonies, in the minglings of light and shadow, Nature does exhibit her ideal in symbol, and in a perfection that Art never can reach. It is evanescent indeed, and may expire within the hour or the day; but pictures, too, are destroyed, and duration has only relative significance. And surely the beauty of color sometimes realized in human flesh, Art struggles in vain to express. Even the luminous hair eludes it. In the moral realm, too, actual life gives us the heroic, the pathetic, the sacrificial as concretely, as touchingly as Art ever does. If Jesus Christ be regarded as natural (which he may be on the human side), and as something objected really to human observation, we have the ideal of human moral perfection before which Art falters, and is wise in abandoning the endeavor to represent it; yet the beauty and the power of this character may be felt, and even this face, perhaps, be imagined



more truly by the devout and humble soul than the work of the artist, unless he, too, be devout and humble, can give it.]

But what need has man to produce works of Art? Is this need accidental? Is it a caprice, or a phantasy? Is it not, rather, a fundamental impulse of our nature? The principle whence Art derives its origin is that in virtue of which man is a being who thinks, who has consciousness of himself; that is, who not only exists, but exists for himself. To be in himself, and for himself, to be doubled upon himself, to take himself as object for his proper thought, and by that to develop himself as a reflecting activity, is what distinguishes man, is what constitutes a spirit. But this knowledge of himself man obtains in two ways,—one theoretical, one practical,—one by science, the other by action;—by science when he knows in himself the development of his proper nature, or recognizes without himself that which constitutes the essence or reason of things;—by practical activity when an impulse moves him to develop himself exteriorly, to manifest himself in that which environs him, and, also, to recognize himself in his works. This need to impress himself upon surrounding objects takes different forms until it arrives at that mode of manifesting himself in external things which constitutes Art. Thus Art finds in the nature of man itself its own necessary origin. What is its special and distinctive character, as contradistinguished from that of politics, religion, or science, will be shown hereafter.

The notion is inadequate that the purpose of Art is merely to excite the sensation of pleasure. Those systems which content themselves with the analysis of impressions and emotions, and go no further, are insufficient, since they furnish no fixed standard, no criterion of excellence. Nothing is more obscure than sensibility, since it admits of only arbitrary and artificial classifications. It admits as causes elements utterly opposed. Its form can, it is true, correspond to the diversity of objects, and one may distinguish the sentiments of the sublime, the moral, and the religious. But if the object is thus regarded as only a modification of the subject, its essential and proper character cannot be ascertained. To find this is the work of reflection and philosophy. Under this mode of studying Art may be included the endeavors to improve the taste simply by quickening through use its appreciative power, which may be done and the ground of the appreciation be unknown, and, after all, the highest reflective gratification be missed. This so-called fine taste halts before the greatest works of Art, and usually occupies itself with its inferior attainments. What, then, is the part of the *sensible* in Art, and its true function?

Here is to be distinguished the sensible element in the object, the work of Art, and the same element in the subject, the artist, as a constituent of his talent or genius. Although the object is addressed to the sense immediately, yet mediately and ultimately it is addressed to the mind, and intended to reach

our spiritual being. The most elementary relation of the sensible with the spiritual in man is that of simple perception, not requiring thus far any act of thought, although the mind bears its spontaneous part in the act of perception. The effort, though voluntary, yet so habitual as to seem spontaneous, to appropriate these objects, constitutes desire. As yet the objects are considered as particulars, and the attempt is not yet made to embrace them in their generality. Desire craves the reality, not the appearance. Hence it does not leave the objects in their independent and free existence. It satisfies itself in utilizing or destroying them. Neither is the subject himself free, for there is no obedience to the monitions of the intelligent will. He is still dependent upon the external world, since the satisfaction of his desire is dependent upon external conditions.

It is not thus that man comports himself before a work of Art. He allows it to subsist in itself, independent, although it exists for the sense. It is not necessary that it should be real and living. Indeed, it ought not to be such, since it is destined to satisfy the interests of the mind, which exclude all desire.

Another relation with the mind of man which external objects present is, that they address the speculative needs of the understanding,—that is, can be *thought*, instead of being perceived and desired. In this exercise the mind has no interest to further, but to know the objects as they are in general, to penetrate to their idea. This interest does not con-

cern their individual existence, and hence allows it to remain undisturbed. But it is in satisfying this speculative need that *science* has its end, whose function is to disengage the law of being, to convert the concrete into the abstract; while Art, on the contrary, does not abandon the individual form as perceived by the senses, and makes no effort to generalize. It results from this that, in a work of Art, the sensible need only be given as an *appearance* of the sensible. What the mind seeks in it is not the material reality, the object of desire, nor the idea in its generality, but a still sensible object, though disengaged from the scaffolding of its materiality. Thus its object is something between the sensible and the rational. It is something ideal which appears as if it were material. Art, then, while it addresses the senses, creates in design a world of shadows, of phantoms, of fictitious representations; and one cannot on that account accuse it of impotence, as incapable of producing anything other than forms devoid of all reality. For these appearances Art does not admit for their own sake, but to satisfy one of the most elevated needs of the spirit, since they do possess the power to make the human heart to vibrate in its profoundest depths.

How, next, is the sensible element to be distinguished in the artist, as well as in his work? Here the principle is the same. The mind is in play, and not coldly intellectual, but warmly emotional. It is not a mere skill, directed by approved rules, or the facility acquired by habit. It is not even a mode of

production like that of the *savant*, who deserts the sensible in order to reach the pure conception, but the elements of intelligence and sensibility are combined, and fused together in the creative activity of the artist. Since it is the mind which creates, it has consciousness of itself and its own development; but it must represent the idea which constitutes the essence of its work under a sensible form. It follows from this that the imagination has one side by which it is a gift of nature, an innate and determined talent [the ability more or less completely to penetrate, to flash through, to illumine, possess and assimilate the sensible object in every part, to find in it, for the time being, the determined form of its own life]. We speak, indeed, of innate scientific talents, but these are, rather, a general facility of abstraction, and the energy to linger meditatively about a fixed topic; and this ability may be increased by use, or even acquired [while imagination, in the sense above, is entirely native, and exists at the highest at the very start]. But it is not imagination only which is sufficient to constitute genius. [It is the servant, and sometimes the master, of the creative impulse, but not that impulse or power itself. When thus native, it may be, but is not always, accompanied by native and special ability to deal with the required technique, and moral energy may be lacking to sustain it; or the narrow range of its experience and the paucity of its ideas may impoverish it. But when the imaginative temperament has an inborn propulsion toward any

form of the Beautiful, it is generally accompanied by facility to deal with the special material of the Art it finds itself most at home in, which shows itself as a strong and positive taste.]

There is an opinion which insists that the design of Art is the imitation of nature. This amounts to saying that what exists in nature man makes a second time as well as the means at hand allow. But one may say that this repetition is useless and lost labor, since what is offered to us in a picture we may behold just as well in our gardens or in our houses; and besides, this superfluous painstaking convicts man of vanity and folly, for only one sense is duped by the imperfect illusions which Art presents. In place of the real and living it puts an hypocritical deception of reality and of life. Instead of praising successes of this kind we ought rather to blame those who can produce only results so manifestly inferior to those of nature. One may, indeed, find pleasure in looking upon a fair imitation of what exists already, but the pleasure is less than that derived from the contemplation of the original, indeed colder, the more perfect the imitation. There have been portraits of which it may be said that they were disgusting in their resemblance. The chant of the nightingale, as Kant observes, imitated by man, displeases us, or at least lowers the quality of our pleasure, as soon as we perceive that it is a man who produces the imitation. It is neither a work of nature nor a work of art. A true creation gives a far higher delight. In this sense the

least invention in the mechanic arts is more noble than anything which is a mere imitation. As the principle of imitation is purely external and superficial, it cannot, as such, go beyond mere faithfulness. And to say that it selects the beautiful from among the ugly objects of nature is to introduce a distinction that does not exist, since there is no criterion which can decide upon the choice of objects as beautiful among the infinite forms of nature. It is the individual taste which alone remains the judge, taste without fixed rules, and which varies among individuals, peoples, degrees of civilization, and circumstances.

[The present author objects strongly to this dictum of Hegel, that there is no criterion by which to decide upon the degree of beauty in the objects of nature, and no vindication of a higher and purer taste. It looks like an abandonment of any endeavor to disentangle and abstract the individual and idiosyncratic element (which has no firm basis, and may undergo change, or disappear) from the entire subjective impression, in order to leave for examination and analysis the permanent and unchanging element, which *has* a true basis, and which, though still subjective, has, as founded on absolute truth, and as part of the ultimate and ideal constitution of the universe, true objectivity. An attempt to do this very thing will be found in the second part of this work. Just here it may be said, that it is a legitimate endeavor in the artist to find in nature the truly beautiful, to rid it of the surrounding contradictions, or to



enhance it by the skillful use of the same. The discovery of this is the discovery of the ideal, not in its abstract but in its concrete and living form; and hereby Art may divine what nature is essentially, in its primitive idea and its ultimate realization, and meanwhile avail itself of the flashes which it rays out in the process of its development. Nature is color as well as form, and it is more than either in the combination of the two, since thereby it comes to have spiritual expression, and in its infinite change hints of its own freedom. To detect this, and fix it, whether in the landscape, or in the human form or face, or in human action, some may call *imitation*, though of a higher kind than to seize and reproduce the mere prosaic aspect.]

This principle of imitation cannot even apply to all the arts. If it can seemingly justify itself in sculpture and painting, what does it mean in architecture, or in any poetry other than mere description? This is mere suggestion, not imitation.

Yet imitation, while not alone constituting a work of Art, still lies at the base of all art-compositions, since their aim is to represent ideas in natural forms. So the artist cannot know too much of nature, and should be able to reproduce her in her most delicate and various effects. And it is well to recall the artist from his *bizarre* aims and effects to the positive, living and regular forms of nature; but after all, the natural, being the exterior and material side of things, ought not to be given as the essence of Art. What, then, is the internal element, the fundamental



something, which Art ought to represent, and wherefore this representation?

We encounter here the opinion which assigns, as the end of Art, to put before our eyes the whole that human nature encloses, and by that to move our sensibility and exalt our imagination,—to realize the saying, "*humani nihil à me alienum puto*"—that is, to watch for all the potencies which slumber within the human soul, to reveal to consciousness whatever is most profound and mysterious in the heart and the thought of man, with all the contrasts, oppositions and contradictions of his nature, his grandeurs and his miseries, his pains and his sufferings, all his sentiments and all his passions, and thus to widen out and complete the circle of our experience, so that man may have lived his life entire; and that Art obtains this result by the illusion which replaces for us the reality.

But it is easy to see that this principle does not determine the true end of Art, for it leaves it completely indifferent what shall be the idea which is the object of the representation. Art can, indeed, furnish a form to everything, can reclothe objects the most dissimilar. It expresses indistinctly the good, the evil, the beautiful, the ugly, the noble, the hideous, the vile and contemptible. In this relation it is with Art as with reasoning. It can be employed to express everything and adorn everything. More than that, in exalting our imagination and exciting our enthusiasm for things contrary to each other, it may make more striking their opposi-

tion. It makes us share the delirium of the Bacchantes, or the indifference of the Sophists.


But this definition, too, is unsatisfactory. Reason searches for a general principle which rules, or should rule, this multiplicity of forms. The question still remains, how can these so diverse elements be harmonized and lead toward a common end?

There is still another manner of conceiving Art and its destination, that which regards its mission to be, to soften human manners. But how has Art this virtue? Grossness or violence of character consists in the tyrannical domination of particular propensities of the sensible nature, destroying even the will to conquer or escape them. Now, Art softens this uncultured rudeness and tempers this violence by giving to man a vision of himself. In this simple picture there is a power to calm and a liberating influence. He sees himself thus objectified, and sees himself dispassionately, and this disposes him to reflect and to discover higher possibilities for himself. This gives to Art a properly moral end. But, indeed, if this be the end of Art, to improve the behavior as a means toward moral improvement, it may be said that all this can be better done otherwise. If Art teaches, it is indirectly, and in a supplementary manner. The sensible form which is essential to a work of Art is thus only an accessory. The abstract idea, which in the strictly moral relation is influential upon the will, is given by Art in concrete and sensible form. This form is surplusage if its mission is only to teach, and all the delight we receive

from Art representations might as well be missed. There may be in any pure work of Art a moral idea possible to be disengaged, but this depends upon the skill of him who knows how to elicit it. We have even heard defended those artistic representations which do anything but soften manners, under the pretext that we ought to know what is bad in order to act morally. On the other side it has been said that the representations of the Magdalen, the beautiful sinner, have led more than one soul to sin, since Art has shown how very beautiful a thing penitence can be made to appear, provided one has not been tempted to accomplish the preliminary condition.

Hegel contends, at greater length than we can reproduce here, that Art must not be regarded simply as a means toward a moral end, and that we must regard it as having its end in itself.

[There is room here, however, for still deeper thought, to reach entire satisfaction. In one sense all things are means to an end, in the Divine intent, — nature, thought, science, philosophy, art, religion. That end is human perfection; and by this is meant not only moral, but intellectual and physical perfection; and this also implies perfection in the environment, which is ever in correspondence with man's spiritual condition and stage of development. This entire synthesis can alone satisfy the demands of Æsthetic, as a philosophy. Moral science presents its aspect of the idea in the shape of obligation, and this is justified by the reason, which is content with nothing less than this concord of wills and subordi-



nation to the Divine will, the source of all existence and the solitary force of the universe.

Æsthetic proper presents the same idea, in concrete shape, as addressed to the imagination, and thus the end is reached, not by reflection, clarifying the ideal end of our activity, but by spontaneous emotion, by intuition, in which is implicit, however, the same satisfaction to the reason. The Beautiful is the idea of perfection concreted, or symbolized, (in which case the symbols are more than symbols, are essential elements of the perfect idea,) and may be displayed either in the physical or the moral world. Thus the root of the Good and the Beautiful is the same, and their end is the same; and moral goodness in its perfection, in its attainment of free spontaneity, becomes an element of the perfect Beauty.

The mission of Art is to gather the scattered threads of this Beauty as it exists in symbol in nature, or in reality in human action, or uniting the two in the human face and form into an unique presentation, thus to fix for imagination the transitory beauty thrown out in the development of the universe: or it is to exhibit some phase of the contradiction and the conflict in the passage from the actual to the realization of the ideal; that is, to exhibit the sublime or the pathetic to the aspiring and struggling soul of man, who is never unmoved thereby. In all this Art may be said to have its end in itself. It is not to show the obligation to reach moral perfection, and inspire reverence for the guiding law, but to show the beauty of perfection and accomplish the perfect

repose and satisfaction of the reason; hence, mysteriously, and truly, even though transiently, to draw the soul toward it, by its own fascination, or as that which is akin is consciously drawn toward that from which it departed, and to which it is struggling or has the impulse to return.

It is only the penetrating movement of human imagination, as it exists in high grade in the artist-poet, which can find all the beauty, or be fully sensible of the contradiction which constitutes the sublime, whether it be in nature or in humanity. To present these for the imaginative appropriation of his fellows, profoundly, or even superficially, if still suggestively, is the impulse of the artist, and is the end of Art.

These thoughts will be further explicated and illustrated in the second part of this work.]

In order to bring out his own idea more clearly, Hegel now refers to the Kantian Æsthetic, according to which the Beautiful awakens a pleasure which is disinterested, which seems general and necessary, without awakening the consciousness of an abstract idea, as matter for reflection, notwithstanding that it contains within itself the relation of conformity to an end. That which we find to be true in this is, the indissoluble unity of that which is supposed to be separate in our consciousness. In the Beautiful, the general and the particular, the end and the means, the idea and the object, penetrate each other completely. Here that which can be considered as the accidental form is so intimately tied to

the general that it is identified with it. Thus, in Art, the Beautiful presents the thought, as it were, incarnate. On the one side the matter, the nature, the sensible, as possessing in themselves measure, design and harmony, are lifted to the dignity of spirit, and participate in its generality. Thought not only abandons its hostility to nature, but smiles within it. Sensation and enjoyment are justified and sanctified in this unity of nature and freedom. Nevertheless, this conciliation, which seems perfect, still possesses a subjective character. It cannot constitute the true Absolute. The principle being, however, the harmonious unity of the two terms, the idea and the form, there follow these conditions:

1. The idea must be such as can be represented, otherwise there is an imperfect connection between the two terms.
2. The idea should not be a pure abstraction, which is saying that the mind itself is of a concrete nature. The God of the Jews and the Turks is an abstract Deity, and therefore cannot be represented by Art. The God of the Christians is a concrete God, a veritable spirit whose concrete nature is expressed by the trinity of persons in unity.
3. If the idea should be concrete, the form should be also. Their union is possible only under such conditions. It is in consequence of this that they are made one for the other, as the body or physical soul and the spiritual soul in humanity. It results from this that the form is essential to the idea, such a form for such an idea, and that in their meeting there is nothing of the accidental. The concrete idea

contains in itself the guide to the form of its external manifestation. Hence, the excellence and perfection of a work of Art will depend upon the degree of the intimate penetration, and upon the unity in which the idea and the form seem made for each other. The highest verity in Art consists in that the spirit has arrived at the mode of existence which suits best the essential idea of the spirit itself. Such is the principle which rules even the divisions of the science of Art; for the spirit, in attaining the true idea of its absolute essence, ought to run through a gradual series of internal developments which have their principle in the same idea, and to make for these changes a corresponding succession of forms, bound together among themselves by the same laws, and by means of which the spirit, regarded as artist, gives the knowledge of itself. This development of the spirit in the sphere of Art presents in its turn two different aspects: first, as a general development, in which the successive phases of universal thought manifest themselves in the world of Art; and secondly, this internal development must realize itself in sensible forms of a different nature. These particular modes of representation introduce into Art a totality of essential differences which constitute the particular Arts. Upon these principles the science of Art contains three fundamental divisions, viz.:

(1) The first part has for its object the general idea of the Beautiful, or the *Ideal*, considered successively in its relation with nature, and in its relation with the proper productions of Art. (2) The



second part traces the essential differences embraced in the idea of Art in general, and the progressive series of forms under which it has been historically developed. (3) The third part embraces the entirety of the particular forms in which may be clothed the Beautiful, when it passes into sensible realization; that is to say, the system of the Arts considered in their special forms.

[It is apparent in what precedes that both Kant and Hegel, when they think of the Beautiful, have in mind the productions of Art, and only reluctantly allow place to the Beautiful in nature, as though Art almost monopolized the Beautiful, and in it alone Beauty, the highest and purest, was to be found. I consider it a defect, in this treatment, that the Beautiful in nature and in human action should not have been first exhaustively considered, since it is out of this and the emotions thence arising that the art-impulse itself springs. Vindication of this criticism will be found interspersed, as there is occasion, in what follows.]



## CHAPTER II.

### BEAUTY IN ITS ABSTRACT IDEA.

HEGEL, as we have asserted, shuns an exhaustive analysis of the emotion of the Beautiful, and thus fails to connect it satisfactorily with Beauty as objective, which he allows. It is to be regretted that he did not permit his mind to wander in this direction, and state here in clear terms his conception of Beauty as it appears to men at first hand. Thus he remarks: "It has never entered into the mind of any one to develop the point of view of the Beautiful in the objects of nature, to give an exposition of these sorts of beauties. We feel ourselves upon too shifting a ground, in a field vague and indeterminate. *A criterion is wanting.*" Assuredly this looks like a declination to justify a true taste for Beauty in general, making it purely subjective, wanting in an objective criterion, and having no sure means of rectification, while contending that this can be done for works of Art. In exhibiting what he makes out the Beautiful in nature to be, we shall see that he declines the fundamental question.

With Hegel, the Beautiful is the *Idea*, but the Idea under a particular form. To define its essential nature he distinguishes between the primitive idea (*Begriff*) and the veritable idea (*Idee*). By the

first seems to be meant the idea in its more subjective character, before purified by elimination, and become accurately representative of the object, or identified with it, when it becomes the veritable idea, which alone has true objectivity. Thus it becomes, at length, the harmoniously completed object in the totality of its immanent relations. The true idea (*Idee*) is concealed beneath the shifting forms of the primitive idea (*Begriff*), and becomes clearer with the progress of development. Thus, in a sense, it is identical with truth, or is an element of the *True*. Yet there is a difference between the True and the Beautiful [which must depend upon the subjective relation]. The true is the Idea (*Idee*) when it is considered in itself, in its general principle, and when it is thought as such. For it is not under its sensible form that it exists for the reason, but in its general and universal character. When the True appears immediately to the mind in its exterior reality, and the idea rests confounded and identified with its external appearance, then the idea is not solely the True, but the Beautiful. The Beautiful, then, may be defined as the sensible manifestation of the Idea. The two elements of idea and form are, in the Beautiful, inseparable. Thus, from the viewpoint of reasoning and abstraction, it cannot be comprehended. Reasoning never seizes but one of its elements. It rests in the finite, the exclusive, and the false. The Beautiful, on the contrary, is in itself infinite and free. This infinity and freedom may be found at the same time in the subject and in

the object, under both the theoretical and practical points of view. The object, in its theoretical or speculative connection, is free, since it is not considered as a simple existence, which as such has its subjective idea (its *raison d'être*) out of itself, is dispersed and lost in the multitude of exterior connections. The beautiful object displays its proper idea realized in its proper existence, and that interior unity which constitutes its life. By that the object has excluded its direction to the external, is free from all dependence upon that which is not itself. It has quitted its finite and limited character to become infinite and free. On the other hand, the Ego, in its connection with the object, ceases equally to be a simple abstraction, a subject which perceives and observes sensible phenomena, and generalizes them. It becomes itself concrete in such object, identifies itself with the unity of the idea and its reality. Thus the relation of the subject to the object is not one of desire, to possess or to make use of the object, but rests in pure contemplation. Through imagination has come to pass a calm and peaceful identity of subject and object, of the soul and the beautiful thing.

[In criticism of the above we may remark, that any object is what it is through relations not solely immanent, but also transcendent, and therefore the rounded completeness, which entitles it to be called "infinite" in Hegel's use of the word, is imparted to it by a synthetic procedure, by the activity of the mind itself. We do not see but that any or every object involving this unity of idea and reality may

be equally entitled to the epithets "infinite" and "free." If by this word "Idea" be meant some determination of the veritable Idea (*Idee*) in the process of its development and purification, it may be questioned whether the degree of Beauty accurately follows this process, and whether the degree of intensity in the emotion is proportioned to this evolution of the Idea, and its acquisition of freedom. I hold it to be a clearer and truer explanation of the Beautiful to say that it consists in the coalescence, through imagination, of the freedom of the subject with the freedom of nature and of spirit—a union of the derived with the absolute spontaneity. The difficulty in Hegel's exposition will be more apparent when we note his treatment of the Beautiful in Nature.]

In the world of nature the primitive Idea (*Begriff*) passes through divers phases before becoming the true Idea. At first it is so confounded with the object as perceived by the senses that it hardly appears; the unity is not seized. Without soul or life it is completely absorbed by the materiality. The inorganic bodies, considered in themselves, exhibit but a group of mechanical and physical properties, which are found equally in any detached particle of the same. That mutual interdependence which is the characteristic of an organic body does not exist. There is no principle which unites the diverse elements. The diversity is a simple plurality, and the unity resides in the similarity of properties. Such is the first mode of the existence of the

Idea. In the higher orders of natural existence the elements of the Idea are liberated in the sense that they obtain an existence separable for thought and a distinct function,—as in our planetary system, where the particular bodies preserve each its proper existence, and are coördinated in one system. The Idea, however, has not reached its completeness, and cannot stop in any such unity as this, for we do not yet see that the idea of the same would be lost if any one orb were missed from the system. The Idea does not attain its ultimate and true existence except when all the parts and elements are so united that the whole represents all the interior reciprocal relations, when each element loses its particular existence and is what it is by virtue of the sum of relations. This ideal unity constitutes the *organism*, and thus only in *life* does the Idea find its realization.

Thus in life, in the life of organized beings only, have we found the Beautiful in nature, according to Hegel. However, because of its sensible and altogether external character, the Beautiful in nature is not beautiful for itself. It is beautiful only for another than itself, for us, for an intelligence which seizes and contemplates it. If, then, we would know why life appears beautiful in nature, and consider it, first, under the point-of-view of activity, what first strikes our eyes is its spontaneous and voluntary movement. In the animal this seems arbitrary, capricious, accidental, determined by external solicitations, or internal proclivities,—not, as in human

movements, according to law and measure, as in music and the dance. Hegel notes but little the beauty and fascination of animal movements, emphasizes only their spontaneity, leaves the charm and definition of *grace* unexplained. What he regards as the chief constituent of the beauty of animals is the external form. This, in its totality, is composed of divers particular forms, colors, movements, etc. In order that all these may appear as constituting a living organism, they ought to show that this has not its true existence in their multiplicity, but in their accord, their harmony. But this unity ought not to present itself simply as a relation of conformity between means and ends; rather, each part preserves its distinct existence, each organ its proper form, not absolutely determined by that of another; yet an interior harmony in this independence is apparent to our senses. If it were not thus apparent, it would exist only for the reason, and thus would not respond to the requirement of the Beautiful, which demands that the Idea be manifested in the sensible reality. It appears in the individual as the principle which binds together the members, which is the substratum of the living thing. According to this, wherever there is this unity and interdependence, this perfect harmony, where the form and the matter are married or identical, there is the presence of the Beautiful. The form inhabits the matter, and constitutes its veritable essence, the internal force which disposes and organizes the parts. Even in inorganic nature, where we admire the regular forms of the crystal,



we do not regard these as produced by a foreign and merely mechanical activity, but by an internal and free force which resides in the mineral itself, and belongs to its inner nature. A similar activity appears, still more concrete and developed, in the living animal.

[But at once the question will occur to the reader, how, then, can we account for the different degrees of beauty in living animals, or for the fact that we regard some of them as ugly, in which, however, there appears all harmony of parts, and needful adaptation for fulfilment of function? Hegel remarks that the slowly and painfully moving animal displeases us, as wanting in that facility and freedom of movement which belongs to a higher order of life. But in the common estimation, not the most active animals are regarded as most beautiful, even in the beauty of form. Grace as well as life is needful for beauty of movement, and grace is left unexplained. Nor is any attempt made to explain the beauty of color, which is relegated to the category of the simply *agreeable*.]

In dealing with the beauty of landscape, which all feel, and many so keenly, he remarks that here we no longer find an organic disposition of parts, as determined by the idea which animates it and gives it life; but we have under our eyes a rich multiplicity of objects, organized and unorganized, forming a totality,—the contours of mountains, the sinuous course of rivers, groups of trees and of buildings, roads, vessels, the sea and the sky, valleys and preci-

pices. At the same time there appears a connection in this diversity, a unity entirely external, which interests us by its agreeable or imposing character. [Here we have a simple statement of the fact, and no attempt to explain the beauty, except as supposed to reside solely in the unity.] But nature, besides, presents a character altogether special in its ability to excite the sentiments of the soul by the sympathetic influence which it exercises upon us. Such is the effect produced by the silence of the night, the calm of the valley, or the winding of the brook, the sublime aspect of the vast or tempestuous ocean, the imposing and mute grandeur of the starry heavens. The æsthetic quality of all these things does not belong to the objects, taken in themselves. The secret is to be found in the sentiments of the human soul which they awaken. Thus, likewise, we call an animal beautiful because it expresses a character similar to the qualities of the human soul,—courage, force, cunning, kindness. [All which will be generally doubted, for not every animal characteristic or propensity which has its congener in human dispositions is regarded as beautiful. Again, Hegel has simply stated a fact, and how these exhibitions of nature are felt to be, and why they are thought to be, beautiful or sublime is entirely unexplained. The feeling precedes the judgment and requires analysis. His thought seems to identify too intimately the Beautiful and the True. With him, the richer, fuller, completer the idea, the more of beauty. Vegetable existence, as such, is more beautiful than inorganic;



animal existence, a higher idea, more beautiful; man, in his idea, more beautiful still. This is a shifting of the received meaning of the word to suit his philosophy. We fail here to see how and why in organic existence one thing is regarded as more beautiful than another, which may display its idea quite as perfectly, and on the same plane; and on the higher plane of the spiritual, beauty of soul, or the beauty of human society, exists only in imperfection, in transition. Its idea is discoverable, and the partial realizations have their charm, and are entitled to the epithet. But closer examination of the concrete reveals rather the contradictory, the struggling, the sublime. Indeed, in his treatment thus far, the Beautiful and the Sublime are not distinguished. He has driven all these subtle facts into the mould of his philosophy; which need not be discarded, but only to have this hiatus filled and to be readjusted to suit the requirements of the problem. Everything, with him, is the *Idea*. This wonderful principle, the determining and life principle of all existence, that of which the universe is the outcome, infinite because independent and absolutely free, displays itself in various manifestations, in higher and higher grades of existence, revealing at each mount more and more of itself, intimating and prophesying at each step new and higher possibilities. We have here, indeed, an objective philosophy which seeks to free itself from all subjective aberrance. It means that, could the perfect mind regard the process of the universe as it is in itself, it would be beguiled into no wrong

judgments, betrayed into no inconsistencies; it would know and feel that in each higher grade of existence there was more of beauty, as more of truth. If so, then our judgments of difference in degrees of beauty in objects on the same plane or grade of existence are unfounded, and arise from the limitations of our minds.

But all this implies that the development of nature as well as of humanity has been orderly and harmonious. If so, there have been no contradictions in either; or the seeming contradictions are parts of the necessary process; or the contradictions of nature are purely physical conflicts, and have no necessary correspondence with those of human life. If difficulties to be overcome arise before man, in the onward march of humanity, they are only to be regarded as stimulus to give him spiritual strength. In all this, the intensest and most real of all contradictions, the moral one, the contradiction of sin, is not enough emphasized, and that thence comes disturbance or hindrance to man's orderly development. Even though the consequences of human action, the material content, be caught up into the stream of Providence, and made to subserve the Divine purpose by wise or inscrutable adaptation, the moral form, the contradiction in the realm of spirit, may yet remain, or grow more intense.

If nature's development is only orderly and beautiful she is thus severed from any intimate moral connection with man, and the connection of man's own physical being with his moral being seems not

essential, but only arbitrary. If man is a part of nature,—in one aspect of his being identified with her,—she, too, must be identified with him, must reflect and be correspondent to his moral being, its conflicts, its fluctuations, and its changes. If the physical universe is to be explained from the spiritual, and not the reverse, her development must follow his, her contradictions must be correspondent to his, grow out of them, and hence symbolize them to his imagination; and she can be sublime as well as beautiful, though perfect Beauty be the ideal end for him and her.

Nature is not, then, always and everywhere beautiful, and her beauty admits of degrees of more or less as truly as man's actual nearness to the ideal of moral perfection admits of degrees of more or less. Normally, nature's development might display, in the hierarchy of ideas, a succession of the more and more beautiful; but her development is abnormal, and is interfered with by the negations which make possible the sublime. Man's own sublime moral victories make possible his intellectual triumphs, and reach even Nature herself, making her more pliant and subservient, and hinting of his ultimate and complete domination. And his Art, too, notwithstanding its periods of stagnation or retrogression, will be competent to express him to the last, if not in every form, yet in some of its forms, in a perfection yet to be reached.

The tendency of Hegel's philosophy, so far as given in the present work, is to exalt thought and

underrate feeling, which may be said without undervaluing the achievements in the realm of thought made once for all by it. The universe with him is a rational process, the outcome of pure spirit. In his *Æsthetic* not enough is made of that which is essential to pure spirit, the principle of love. The ideal life seems to be pure intellectual contemplation, and emotion seems something secondary and hardly essential.

But indeed our concrete human life and aspiration demand more than this. Beauty, as Truth grows clearer and brighter, brings purer, sweeter, warmer, more exquisite feeling. No imaginative endeavor, no process of abstraction, can sever feeling from thought. We must not seek to banish it from our philosophically constructed universe. Thought and feeling are not contradictories or aliens, opposite poles, one of which must weaken as the other strengthens; one of which must die when the other becomes perfect. Rather, they are essential characteristics of all concrete and possible existence. Feeling is before thought, and thought is for feeling, rather than feeling for thought. When feeling is made the object of thought, it has itself stimulated that thought; indeed it has originated all thought, for, in the development of the human subject, feeling is first and thought is but its determination from without, and its clarification.

In the First Principle, which as a concrete one must have immanent relations, *Love* is the *prius*, as the very definition of *Life*. Life could never have

existed on our planet unless the principle of the universe were loving. The Divine omnipresence means not only that thought (which is consciousness) is everywhere, but that delight and joy are everywhere, and that the Divine displeasure, too, as the necessary attitude of love toward its own contradiction, is to be found. All pain and hate are but love turned upon itself, and introducing contradiction, and so nothing comes of hate and pain but narrowness and poverty of being.

Elsewhere, indeed, in Hegel's works, in his Philosophy of Religion, due prominence is given to the view that in the Absolute the process by which the Trinity is Trinity is no less the process, and so the very substance of *Love* as of *Thought*. But this is not availed of in his Æsthetic, as it might have been, to explain the problem of Beauty and Sublimity at first hand, in nature and in human life.]



## CHAPTER III.

### BEAUTY IN THE CONCRETE.

**B**UT let us see whether in Hegel's further analysis is any explanation of the grades of Beauty in concrete objects. He says, the beauty of form in nature shows itself successively as regularity, symmetry, conformity to law, and harmony.

Regularity is the equality or repetition of a unique and unchanging shape. On account of its abstract simplicity this unity is the farthest removed from the highest and true unity. Straight lines are regular, but no repetition of them, unless in a symmetrical figure, would constitute Beauty. Why, when they do constitute a symmetrical figure, as the cube, there is a faint intimation of beauty, is unexplained. Hegel simply notes the fact. In the ascending scale of being, the crystal, the plant, the animal, symmetry becomes less essential, or rather is subordinated to qualities still higher. The next of these is, conformity to law. Here, while there is less repetition of an identical form, or a combination of the equal and unequal uniformly alternate, there is yet an intimate accord of the essentially different elements. Thus in the transition from the straight line to the curve, and from the circle to the ellipse and the parabola, mere regularity is less and less apparent, and

conformity to and evidence of the inner law become more and more apparent. [But why the pleasure in the curve is enhanced as we mount is not explained, except that the idea becomes more recondite and intellectual. Hegel cannot but acknowledge the superior beauty of the spiral, in which conformity to its law is just discoverable, but I cannot say whether he would, or would not, the still greater beauty of a system of curves whose law is utterly undiscoverable. If he would, this would seem to be a contradiction of his rule. Surely the law of the curves of the human body, too, is undiscovered by the æsthetic sense, and only yields to prolonged scientific inquiries. The solution of the sense of beauty here is, that the ideal physical freedom is appropriating by imagination its congener or symbol. It is emancipation from physical constraint in the degree suggested by the idea of the object. It involves an acknowledgment of the verity of the Divine idea of man, that the physical aspect and relations of his concrete being should be at the service of the spiritual, as the universe itself, the ever-developing glory, is to the Divine spirit. All the recognitions of natural beauty before and hereafter alluded to may be explained by the same principle.]

A still higher element is harmony. This is such a connection between the divers elements forming a totality, that their differences, which are differences of quality, have their principle in the essence of the thing itself. This connection, which includes that of *conformity* to law, and leaves behind it mere equal-

ity or alternative repetition, is such that the differences between the elements appear not solely as differences and oppositions, but as forming a unity, all the terms of which are in interior accord. Their opposition is destroyed by the manifestation of their reciprocal agreement. The pleasure in harmony consists in its shunning differences too rude and oppositions too startling, for the accord must be still more apparent than the differences, and never, or but momentarily, be lost sight of. But even harmony is not the free subjectivity which constitutes the essence of the Idea and of the soul. For in this is something more and higher than mere reciprocity and the accord of elements. There is the negation of their differences, which thus produces a spiritual unity. Harmony in music does not go so far, even, as melody, which possesses a subjectivity more free and living.

[To this we may add that the comparative delight in harmony and melody does not measure the beauty, for the sensuous agreeableness, in respect of their susceptibility for which persons are so differently constituted, must be taken into account. In feeling this the soul is passive, while in apprehending beauty it is active. But in abstracting from this the pure beauty of the two, it will be found that for ordinary souls the pleasure in simple *melody* is greater, for its beauty is still physical; while in harmony a moral accord may be symbolized, and thus a higher beauty be felt, and felt in an increasing degree as the subject soul advances in the moral life. Thus in harmony



we may have several melodies, and hence a more intricate organism; no impairment of freedom, but freedom finding itself enriched and its joy redoubled.]

The beauty of matter considered in itself, after abstraction of the form, consists in its unity and identity with itself, *i.e.* its purity. [This should mean purity of color, for mere homogeneity of chemical constituents arouses no feeling and does not constitute Beauty. Thus pure color Hegel declares to be more agreeable than that which is the result of mixture. Possibly more *agreeable*, but, in the common judgment, less beautiful; for surely there is an intenser feeling of the Beautiful in subtle gradations of color, which are the result of mixture, than in any homogeneous mass. There is no attempt to account for these degrees of Beauty.]

Hegel is evidently anxious to have done with this part of his subject-matter, and to reach his proper topic, the Beautiful in Art. Before dismissing nature, which gives us the first form of the Beautiful, he examines at length why it is necessarily imperfect, in order that we may comprehend the necessity and the essence of the Ideal. I give the outcome in what follows.]

In the individuals which nature shows us, we see the Ideal passing into real existence, but still it is fettered by the bonds of the external world, by its dependence upon circumstances,—in a word, by the finitude which characterizes all phenomenal manifestation. The real world presents itself as a system

of necessary relations between individuals or forces, which have the appearance of existing for themselves, but are nevertheless employed as means in the service of ends foreign to themselves; or themselves have need of something foreign to serve as means to themselves. Thus there is the possibility of chance or caprice as well as of necessity or want. It is not under such a set of conditions that the individual can develop himself freely. Thus the animal as an individual belongs to a particular element, the air, the water, the earth, which determines its kind of life, its nourishment, its entire mode of existence. It is in perpetual dependence upon nature and external circumstances. Under the dominion of all these forces, it is liable, when they become too severe for it, to lose the plenitude of its forms, and the flower of its beauty. Even the human body, though in a degree less, is submitted to a similar dependence upon external objects. But it is especially in the midst of interests which belong to the world of spirit that this dependence is manifest. Without speaking of the contradiction between the ends of the material life, and the more elevated designs of the spirit, the individual, to preserve himself, is obliged to yield himself in a thousand ways, to be simply means to the ends of others, and reciprocally to reduce others to the condition of simple instruments for his proper interests. The individual, in the prosaic world of daily occurrences, does not develop himself as a complete being, intelligible in itself, and never receiving from another the reason for its activity. In the im-

portant situations where men unite and form great assemblies there breaks forth the diversity and the opposition of their proclivities and their interests. Compared as to the general design, the individual efforts which tend toward it amount but to a fractional portion. The leaders themselves, who rule the situation, do not escape the embarrassment of the circumstances. Under all these relations the individual cannot preserve in this sphere the appearance of a free force developing itself without hindrance in the fullness of its life, which is what constitutes its Beauty. Every individual belonging to the real world of nature or of spirit lacks absolute freedom, because it is limited, or, rather, particularized in its existence. Each individual being of living nature belongs to a determined species, fixed, whose limits it cannot pass. By this same its type is given. It is enclosed within a circle that cannot be broken through. Without doubt the spirit may find the complete idea of its life realized in the organism which belongs to it; and compared with man, the animals, especially the inferior kinds, must seem but poor and miserable existences. But the human body itself presents, with regard to its beauty, a progression of forms correspondent to the diversity of races. After these differences come the hereditary qualities of the family, the peculiarities which belong to the occupation of life, the varieties of temperament, the originalities and singularities of character; and afterward, the habitual passions, the interests to the pursuit of which man devotes himself, the revolu-



tions which occur in his morality and general conduct;—all these exhibit themselves in the external form, and engrave themselves in traits profound and ineffaceable upon the physiognomy; even so far, at times, as to disfigure and efface the general type. In this respect there is nothing in the world more beautiful than young children, because in them all these peculiarities slumber yet, and exist only in germ. Every passion is as yet chained within their breasts. Of all the interests, so numerous, which agitate the human heart, no one as yet has engraved its furrow and marked its fatal sign upon the mobile face. But at this age of innocence, although in the vivacity of the child everything is announced as possible, one does not recognize in it any of the profound characteristics of the spiritual soul, which beholds itself forced to fall back upon itself, and to pursue, in its development, the elevated ends which belong to its essential nature.

All these imperfections can be comprised in a one-word description, the *Finite*. Animal life and human life cannot realize the Idea under its perfect form, equivalent to the Idea itself.

Such is the principle for which the spiritual soul, failing to find in the sphere of reality, and amid its bounding circumstances, the vision and the delight of its freedom, is forced to seek satisfaction in a more elevated region. This region is that of Art, and *its* reality is the Ideal.

The necessity of the Beautiful in Art derives, then, from the imperfections of the *real*. The mis-

sion of Art is to represent, under sensible forms, the free development of life, and especially of spirit; in one word, to make the external appearance correspond to the Idea. Thus only does it come to pass that the True is disentangled from accidental and transitory circumstances, and escapes from the law which condemns it to run through the series of finite things. It is then that it arrives at such exterior manifestation, which allows no more to be seen the needs of the prosaic world of nature; that it arrives at a representation worthy of itself, which offers us the spectacle of a free force, relying only upon itself, having in itself its proper destination, and not receiving its determinations from any alien source.

[In this first part of Hegel's treatise (which occupies but a small portion of the entire work), which treats of the Idea of the Beautiful in general, and of the Beautiful in nature, we have kept more closely than elsewhere to his text, giving at times a free translation, and condensing where possible, aiming to give the essential thought; because here is the foundation of the whole work. These are the principles which enable us to understand all that follows, and which vindicate its truth. If all this be admitted, we know what Art is, and what is its mission, and have a criterion by which to judge its productions.

Here let us pause to make a critical survey of what goes before, to see if it can be maintained without qualification; premising, however, that even if one should modify Hegel's theory of the Beautiful, there is yet, in the work, ample compensation for the

most thoughtful, and abundant instruction and entertainment for the ordinary reader.

The key to the understanding of the whole is to be had by comprehending the precise signification which he gives to the word "*Idea*."

Plato's *ideas* are something quite other, the archetypes or patterns in the Divine mind, therefore pre-existent to their concretion, or perfect or imperfect realization. If any philosophy refuses to acknowledge this preëxistence, it still finds the idea, or *schema*, realized in the concrete object; and it is thus separable for thought.

Plato's thought may be made to coalesce with Hegel's, if these "ideas" are considered as determinations of the absolute Idea in its progressive evolution, never, in the process, perfectly realized, owing to the principle of contradiction which has entered the universe.

Hegel's Idea is the absolute Spirit, self-determined, therefore free; independent, therefore infinite; self-consistent, therefore necessary; not the absolute Spirit regarded as the sum of its immanent relations, in its inexhaustibility, as having its ground in itself, and therefore under no necessity for transcendent objectification, but the Spirit regarded as revealing itself, only known by such revelation coming to expression in an hierarchy of forms. It is the efficient force of the universe, not a blind force (for neither nature nor any abstract thinking can show us any such), and therefore intelligence and will; realizing more and more of its essentiality in the



inorganic, vegetable, animal, human worlds. Hegel knows no absolute Spirit but as thus self-revealed, makes this transcendent objectification a part of the essence of the Divine Being, and thus breaks with the biblical idea which holds to no necessity of self-revelation, but regards creation as a free act, and the universe as the outcome of the Divine glory, synthesized by a loving will. In other words, in the former notion freedom is still a metaphysical necessity; in the latter, freedom in its perfection is a moral necessity.

Thus the absolute Beauty would be the perfect revelation in concrete forms to intelligences (who, too, are the outcome of the Divine glory, when the loving will has informed it), of the Divine Being in essence and perfection, of the Trinity in unity,—if that were possible. The abstracted essence regarded by the cold reason is the absolute Truth; that essence shown to our mixed natures in the *matériel* supplied by the Divine glory thus informed by love and wisdom, and breaking into forms which do not all conceal but manifest its freedom, is Beauty.

According to Hegel, the grades and degrees of Beauty in the outer world, as perceived by us, are dependent upon the less or more of the Idea exhibited in them. All men, therefore, should be more beautiful than animals, all animals than vegetable life, and vegetable life than inorganic existence. But as even human life, in its individual or social aspect, fails to reveal the Idea perfectly, being full of contradictions and inharmonies, therefore man, who aspires after

the perfect, and will be content with nothing less than the highest, eliminates all imperfection from the Idea as he finds it reflected in his own mind, and betakes himself to Art.

The common judgment is not wholly convinced by this, and may insist upon its (partial, at least) qualification. If one admits any distinction between the Beautiful and the *agreeable*, and we would define the former, we must abstract the latter, if possible, from the total subjective impression. In such a separation in thought we find that in the latter the subject is *passive* (so is the sensory constructed), while in the former he is *active*. The soul goes out and coalesces with the object, so that the object becomes the form of its life for the time being. In this activity, then, busy with the symbols of its own longed-for freedom, is the essence and the secret of the emotion of the Beautiful; and the characteristic, whether in nature or in Art, so detected, is objective Beauty. Thus it would appear that the more of the Idea to be revealed, the keener and stronger imaginative activity required, the more delight in such activity, the intenser the emotion, the more or higher objective Beauty. Were nature and human life developing themselves normally, spontaneously, without cataclysms or contradictions, in a harmonious onward and upward evolution, we should always have only pure Beauty. But as this is not the case, and the destructive modes of physical force exist, and moral evil obtrudes itself, and hinders and undoes the work of good, therefore is freedom concealed, and beauty



disguised and hidden, both in nature and in man, and must be detected and drawn out by an imaginative process. It exists side by side with the ugly and the wicked. Exaggerations and conflicts exist in the material world, and in the psychical and social, and so there comes to exist the *Sublime*: and we may see that Art occupies itself as much with the Sublime and the Pathetic as with the properly Beautiful, and has achieved in it some of its greatest triumphs.

If Beauty be the revelation of the free spirit, in whatever realm, then what appears as the Beautiful in nature, in any form, must possess it, as well as the Beautiful in Art. It cannot be, then, that in all respects Art is superior to nature, and reveals more of the Idea. If the Beautiful is the free, then nature must be free, and what are called the laws of nature are not metaphysical necessities, but simply the free manifestation and the limitations of the absolute Spirit to meet the needs and adapt itself to the comprehension and appreciation of the created and limited intelligence. If there are beauties in nature greater in their kind than Art can attain to, then, in this respect, nature is higher than Art; and the absolute Spirit accomplishes more in dealing with its own glory direct than when it works through the mediation of the human imaginative soul. And this seems to be true in all that pertains to light and color, as purely such, in which Art never shows us perfect work, though in form it seems to have divined what nature intends, the idea with which she began, and the reality that she will end with,—and in this

respect Art may be said to be superior to nature. This triumph of Art has its analogue in Ethic, where human scrutiny finds in man's moral nature an outline of his ideal origin and his actual end.

In reply to the saying that Art is the work of man, nature the work of God, Hegel says that God reveals himself in man, and therefore the best of man's works are the best of God's. This is true, but God's revelation of himself in man receives a subjective bias or coloring from the self-determining being, and therefore his works may misrepresent God, and be false. But indeed man's best works,—the holy life, the sublime strength, the patient endurance, when they are objects for the subjective appreciation, do show the best of God, rather than nature. Art does not reach this height, and mere genius cannot realize these in Art with perfect understanding and self-consistency. No mere artistic work could draw such a character as Jesus Christ, and there is more in the saint than in any picture of him, in colors or in words.

There are passages in Hegel which seem to show his recognition of the truth that the emotion of the Beautiful is the coalescence of the subjective soul with the objective soul of the universe; as when he says, of the subject, 'It becomes itself concrete in the object because it takes knowledge of the unity of the Idea and its reality'; but it is doubtful whether this thought, in his mind, had any other application than to the work of Art. Wherever this concretion occurs it is by an imaginative activity, and Beauty is dis-

covered and felt only where freedom is discovered and felt by the free soul. The mistakes and disagreements in subjective and individual judgments arise from not spontaneously or reflectively eliminating the other elements of the complex consciousness and leaving behind the pure elements of the Beautiful. When Hegel speaks of the Beautiful in nature it seems doubtful whether he has made this analysis and elimination. He seems to have retained the element of the *agreeable*, as when he speaks of the *beauty* of a mere mass of color. If there then be too low an appreciation of the Beautiful in nature, and hence too high an exaltation of the Beautiful in Art, these oversights will show themselves in his treatment of the same; and it may be that the conclusion is too hastily reached that nature cannot satisfy, and that Art must, seeing that in modern experience Art can be turned from as corrupting, and nature be resorted to as a refuge which "never does betray the heart that loves her."]

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE IDEAL IN ART.

WE reach, now, Hegel's proper topic, the Beautiful, or (which is the same with him), the Ideal in *Art*.

By the Ideal seems to be meant the *Idea* as so far forth manifested, some stage in its evolution seized in its unity. This, however, is always hinting of something beyond, and to fix in enduring form this Ideal is the mission of Art.

For example: in the human body the Idea appears under the form of the reciprocity of the organs. It manifests in each member but one particular activity and one partial movement. But it may be said that in the eye the soul concentrates its entire self, and that it is not solely by the eye that it sees, but also that by the eye it is seen. And Art may be represented in a similar manner, since it has for its end to render the form by which it would represent the Idea similar throughout its whole extent to the eye which is the seat of the soul, and renders the mind visible. But what *is* this soul which is thus capable of shining through all the parts of the form? Certainly we do not find it in inorganic nature, or even in animated natures. In these everything is finished, bounded, deprived of knowledge of itself



and of freedom. It is in the development and life of the spirit only that can be found the free infinity which consists in its resting upon itself, in its ability to return to itself in any and every manifestation. In this only is true freedom, and until this is acquired it must exist but as a limited force—a character arrested in its development. Here we have only a form devoid of true spirituality. To communicate to this finite and changing reality a true independence and substantiality, to represent it in its conformity to the Idea, is the mission of Art. Truth in Art, then, does not consist in mere fidelity in the imitation of nature. The real has been soiled by its mixture with the accidental, and Art must eliminate this defilement, and restore the contemplated object to its harmony with its veritable Idea. Thus it flatters nature, as they say painters do in their portraits. And this, by the way, the portrait-painter ought to do; he must disregard the insignificant and changing accidents of the figure in order to seize and represent the essential and permanent traits of the physiognomy, which are the expression of the original soul of the subject; for it is exclusively the property of the Ideal to put in harmony the exterior form with the soul. But this spiritualization of the exterior reality does not go so far as to present the generic under its abstract form. It stops at the intermediate point, where the form purely sensible and the pure spirit find themselves in accord. The Ideal, then, is the reality withdrawn from the domain of the particular and the accidental, yet so that the spiritual principle

appears still as a living individuality. Schiller, in a piece of verse entitled "The Ideal and Life," opposes to the real world, to its sorrows and its conflicts, the silent and calm beauty of the "Sojourn of the Shades." This empire of shadows is the Ideal. The spirits which belong there are dead to the real life, detached from the needs of natural existence, delivered from all the bondage to external things, from all the reverses and distractions inseparable from development in the sphere of the finite. The culminating point and essential trait of the Ideal is this calm, full of serenity, this unchanging happiness. Every ideal existence in Art appears to us as a kind of happy divinity. Schiller's word is, "The Serious is the property of Life; Serenity belongs to Art." Yet the Serious is not wanting from the Ideal, but precisely in the Serious serenity still rests as the fundamental character. This might of the individuality, this triumph of liberty concentrated in itself, is what we particularly recognize in antique Art; and this is the case not only where the personage preserves his calmness, as exempt from assault, but even where the subject has been struck by one of those terrible blows which shatter the entire existence. Thus, we behold the tragic heroes succumb to destiny, but the soul retires back upon itself, and finds itself in all its independence, when it says, *It ought to be thus*. The man prostrated by destiny can lose his life, but not his liberty. In Romantic Art, it is true, the interior lacerations and the discords of the powers of the soul are pressed much farther. In it the

oppositions are, in general, more profound. Nevertheless, although grief penetrates deeper into the soul than with the ancients, there is still represented a joy in sacrifice, a blessedness in suffering, a delight in grief, a happiness even in the martyrs. This expression in Romantic Art has been called *Laughter amid tears*. Tears belong to sorrow, laughter to serenity; and laughter amid tears betokens the independence of the free soul amid suffering. Simple lamentation, abandonment to tears, is displeasing. To show the soul strong even in weeping is what Art rightly deals with. And there is a laughter unworthy of Art,—that which flatters its own vanity at the sight of another's discomforts and miseries. How differently we are affected by the laughter of the gods in Homer, which wells out of their unalterable felicity, which expresses their self-command and serenity, and is not a complete abandonment!

In discussing the question whether Art should represent objects such as they are, or should glorify and transfigure nature, Hegel makes these points.

The Ideal *can* be presented in something purely exterior and formal. The topic may be completely indifferent, or borrowed from common life, something that offers us but a passing interest. It is in this that Dutch painting has produced effects so various, in representing the fugitive situations of human life. In their handling, these situations present something more than the prosaic reality. It is a sort of mockery—an irony by which the soul enjoys the real world and its external forms. And Art may



lift even insignificant objects to the form of their ideality, and fix for duration that which in nature is transitory,—a smile which is effaced on the instant; a ray of light which disappears; the fugitive traits of the soul in common life. All the circumstances which flit by and are forgotten Art lifts into reality, and in this respect surpasses nature. A still higher interest is created when Art so represents these common things as to widen their significance, to render them members in an ideal unity. The Artist does not take, as to forms and modes of expression, all that he finds in nature, and because he finds it there; but if he would produce the truly poetic, he seizes only the true traits, conformed to the idea of the thing. When he would represent the human form, he does not proceed as is done in the restoration of old pictures, where they represent faithfully in the places newly painted all the marks and corrugations caused by the drying of the pigments and the varnish. In the painting of portraits there is no attempt to represent the network of the skin, or the marrings it may have received from accident. Without doubt, the muscles and the veins ought to be expressed, but not marked with the same details and the same precision as in nature; for in all this the spirit goes for little; but it is the expression which the soul has that is the essential thing in the human form. Thus, Homer's characterization does not busy itself with things too small. The portrait of Achilles stops with his principal traits.

Is there, then, any opposition between the Ideal

and the natural, if the natural can become the form of the spiritual, if nature in being idealized becomes spiritualized? There are those who contend that the natural forms in which the spirit appears, without having been worked over by Art, are so beautiful, and so perfect in themselves, that there is no ideal beauty which can be thus distinguished from the real: while others take ground precisely opposite. As to this, it may be said that the forms under which the spirit appears in the real world are already only symbolic. All real as they are, they are still ideal, and to be distinguished from nature as such, which represents nothing of the spiritual.

[Is not this division of nature into the Ideal and the Non-ideal something arbitrary, and is not the seeming distinction owing to the limitation of our faculties? Either all things are moving harmoniously to a beautiful and consoling end, could we only perceive it; or nature shows us both freedom and struggle, the Beautiful and the Sublime, and is everywhere symbolic. This difficulty could have been overcome, had there been in Hegel's treatise a fuller treatment of the Sublime.]

But Art can hardly find in the real world models sufficiently expressive to meet all its requirements. This is a mere question of fact and experience. But however beautiful the natural face or form may be, every artist whose aims are high finds himself obliged to idealize. Something more than physical beauty is required. The living individuality of the subject must demand, in each case, a unique syn-

thesis. The Greek divinities are not mere repetitions of each other. To give the relations of the subject to his entire living environment, in which consists his individuality, the artist must penetrate beyond the mere outward appearance.

In this part of the book occurs an interesting digression to show that drapery may receive and partake of, enhance, or conceal the spiritual expression, which I will condense.

Both the ancient and the modern dress have for their object to cover the body; but the clothing represented in antique Art is a surface without determined form; or if there is a peculiar shape, it is only as having need to be attached somewhere, as, for example, to the shoulders. In all the rest of its extent it falls simple and free, abandoned to its proper weight, or harmonizing with the positions, the carriage or the movements of the body. Thus, from this capacity to take all forms without possessing any in itself, it is eminently fitted to become the movable expression of the soul, which manifests itself and acts through the body. It is in this that consists the Ideal in drapery.

In our modern habiliments, on the contrary, the entire stuff is fashioned once for all, measured, cut and fitted to the shapes of the body, so that little or nothing of it is left to float or fall freely. The structure of the limbs compels the vestment to a certain regularity, but it is always a bad imitation of the human body, without counting that it varies with the fashions and the caprice of the time.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE REALIZATION OF THE IDEAL

**B**UT now occurs the further question, how can the Ideal, in passing into the exterior and finite realm, preserve its proper nature; and how can the external world, on its side, receive into itself the ideal principle which constitutes Art?

The Divine is the center of the representations of Art; but, considered in itself, in its absolute unity, it escapes sense and imagination. It is therefore that it is forbidden to Jews and Mahometans to offer to the eyes any sensible image of the Divinity. Here every career is closed for Art, since it has essentially the need of concrete and living forms. Lyric poetry only, in its soaring upward, can celebrate the Divine potency and sovereignty. But man knows the Divine Being only in his transcendent relations, and these are determinations. If imagination can represent anything of these attributes by sensible images, it becomes thereby a proper subject for Art.

In the evolution of the idea of the Divine we find that, historically, it divided and scattered itself into a multitude of gods, who could enjoy an independent and free existence, as in the Greek Polytheism; and even from the Christian point of view God appears,



in opposition to his purely abstract spiritual unity, under the appearance of a true man. And besides, the Divine principle can manifest and realize itself under a determined form as residing in the depth of the human soul, present in the heart of man, and acting by his will; and then, in this sphere, men filled with the Divine spirit,—holy martyrs, saints, and personages of exalted virtue,—become also proper subjects for Art. The Divine principle shows itself, also, in the forms of human activity, in the endeavors to realize the moral and social ideal, and all the display of action and passion exhibited in this endeavor Art may represent. [Here the Ideal shows itself as struggling with the real, overcoming its hardness and difficulty. This is the region of the Sublime. Yet the objective aim of the Ideal is to cease to be sublime, to transmute combative strength into the strength of spontaneity, to lose itself in the higher form of the Beautiful, which is in its perfection a still purer form of the Ideal.]

The highest form for Art, then, shows itself when the divinities of the old Polytheism, or when Christ, the apostles, saints, or virtuous men, are represented in that state of calmness and blessedness, and of profound satisfaction, where all that belongs to the terrestrial life, its needs, its bonds, and its oppositions, affect them not. In this sense, Painting and Sculpture, principally, have discovered the ideal forms to represent the gods in their proper individuality, or Christ as the Redeemer of the world, and

the apostles and saints as isolated personages. The absolute Truth appears here as having retired into itself, as not allowing itself to be fettered by any bonds of the finite. This eternal, unalterable calm, or this powerful repose,—as it is represented, for instance, in Hercules,—constitutes, under a determined form, the Ideal as such. And even when the gods are represented in their activity, they need not however, descend from the dignity of their immutable character, and their inviolable majesty; for Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, Mars, although determined forces, are yet firm and unagitated at the base, preserving their independence even when their activity is outwardly exercised.

In a degree less elevated, and in the circle of terrestrial and human life, the Ideal manifests itself as determined, when one of the eternal principles which fill the heart of man possesses the force to rule all the inferior impulses of the same. Thus sensibility and activity, notwithstanding their particular and finite character, are lifted above the region of the accidental. That which is called the noble, the excellent, the perfect in human character, is nothing else, in effect, than the veritable essence of spirit, the moral and Divine principle which manifests itself in man. But since this is a world of opposition and confusion, the Universal Spirit, if it is to reveal its activity in highest form, must pass out from its repose, and show itself in the midst of, and as contrasted with, this discord and strife. What, then, in

this world, which serves as the theater of its development, will best serve the purpose of the Ideal?

As defined thus far the Ideal appears as a free potency which relies only upon itself. The world, to receive it into its bosom and permit it to develop itself, should present the image of independent existence and freedom. If the ideal existence is to appear, then, under the form of a visible and immediate reality, which form is determined by the onward march of the world, it must necessarily be associated with the *accidental*, or what appears to ordinary observation as such. The laws and customs of the political state, and of social life, are regulated in a mode independent of the individual will, and these constitute a barrier which caprice finds itself obliged to respect, or submit to, or overcome. If Art would free itself from the restraint thus imposed, it must fall back upon a more primitive condition of things, in which the power is not thus abstract and diffused, but resides still in individuals, who from the innate force of their character dominate the social state in which they live. Such a social condition is found in what is called the heroic age. There we encounter the indissoluble alliance of the two elements which compose the Ideal,—the general and the particular reunited and concentrated in strong individualities. The true hero is not he who exhibits the *virtus* of the Romans, which consists in sacrifice to the state, but he who is capable of the *ἀρετή* of the Greeks, who draws from himself, from his free spontaneity, and his personal sentiments, the principle of his



actions. Right and order do not govern them, but emanate from them. Such is the idea the ancients had of Hercules; and the heroes of Homer, though they have a common chief, do not submit to his authority from obligation, but freely. Nothing can be less like a monarch than Agamemnon. The heroic character does not hesitate to accept the consequences of its actions. Even when, as with Œdipus, the crime is involuntary, the culpability is accepted and punished. He does not throw off his faults upon another. This would be to confess weakness. Nor does he, to escape responsibility, withdraw himself from ties which bind him to the moral world. The son regards himself as responsible for the fault of his ancestor. Thus we see, easily, how the ideal existences of Art have been so constantly chosen from the mythologic ages. If the existing age is chosen as the scene, the poet's work, if at all idealized, wears the appearance of artificiality and premeditation. And not only is that condition of things suitable for the Ideal confined to certain determined epochs, but Art also prefers for its personages a particular rank, that of *Princes*; and this not from any fondness for aristocracy, but on account of the perfect liberty of will and action which obtains in such rank. In the ancient Tragedy we find the *Chorus*, which is something deprived of all individuality, and representing the totality of the sentiments, ideas and passions of the epoch, and forming a sort of plane upon which moves the action. Upon this base are lifted the individual characters, the

personages who play an active *rôle*, who are the chiefs of the people, or members of royal families. The figures borrowed from the lower ranks, in whatsoever activity they share, appear to us unfree, restrained and hindered. An external necessity weighs upon them. Behind them is the invincible force of the civil order, against which they can do nothing, and they are submitted to the will of powerful men whose caprice is authorized by the laws. The conditions and the characters taken from this sphere are, in general, more proper for Comedy. The personages of Shakespeare, it is true, do not always belong to the condition of Princes, and many of them are taken from the historic epochs, but they are placed in the midst of the civil wars, where the bonds of the social order are relaxed or broken, and the laws are without force; and in this environment they find the liberty and independence needed in the personages of Art.

Thus the sphere of action for the purposes of Art is limited. Our modern social life is quite unsuitable. Nevertheless, we see, as in the youthful productions of Goethe and Schiller, the endeavor to find in the bosom of modern society the independence so almost entirely lost; but their only resort for such an end is in representing a revolt from the social order, as in Charles Moor and Wallenstein. But the moment that the legal status, in its prosaic form, is resumed, the adventurous liberty of the chivalrous personages finds itself out of place, and if it attempts from individual authority to redress the

wrongs, it becomes ridiculous, as in Don Quixote. Nevertheless, even in the heroic age the special *situation* suitable for Art must be sought out. The different Arts here are placed in unequal conditions. Sculpture is very limited in its range compared with painting, poetry, or music. There are three essential moments in the development of the situation.

1. *The absence of situation*, i.e., opposed to a determined situation; as when all relation to anything exterior is wanting, and the subject is shut up in his own unity, as in the ancient sculptures in the temples. Egyptian sculpture, and the most ancient Greek, furnish us the model for this absence of situation. And in Christian Art, God the Father and Jesus Christ are represented often in the same manner. So, too, the portraits of later time.

2. *The situation deprived of all serious character.* Here it has moved away from its silent repose; the image of supreme felicity has quitted that state of inflexibility which announces an independent potency concentrated in itself. What characterizes this situation is, that it has no results; there is no opposition, and hence no reaction. But, in its innocence, it finds itself unembarrassed and ready for action. Art makes use of this when it indicates some particular end, some action in relation to external objects, yet which still expresses the internal liberty of the subject, whose serene felicity remains untroubled. Such is the situation of the Belvedere Apollo. The god, after having slain with his arrows the serpent Python, advances in all his nobility and grandeur, expressing



the sentiment of his victory by the disdain which escapes from his lips. Of this kind is that of Venus often, or of Cupid, Bacchus, the fauns and satyrs. Similarly, it is this sort of situation which is adapted to the purposes of lyric poetry. A particular sentiment can constitute such, and may be felt poetically, and placed in relation with external circumstances, soliciting the poet to clothe what he experiences, and what is pressing upon his imagination, in an artistic form.

3. But the importance of situations can only commence when there is an opposition between different principles,—that which constitutes a *collision*. A collision has its origin in some violation which cannot subsist as such, and which ought to disappear. It is some change deranging the existing condition, where, without it, harmony would reign, and which calls for a new change. It is not yet an action, but, nevertheless, may be the result of an anterior action, as in the ancient Trilogies. These collisions have need of a *dénouement*, which shall succeed the strife of opposing powers. Such situations are availed of chiefly by Dramatic Art. Sculpture gives only the completed action, and painting one moment of action. In dramatic poetry we have the whole development, the discord, and the re-established harmony. These situations, however, present a difficulty, and thus afford the conditions for a triumph. The beauty of the Ideal is in its unalterable unity, in its absolute calm and perfection. But the collision destroys this harmony, and throws the ideal into dissonance. The

problem of Art is, in this strife, not to allow the free beauty to perish, and yet to develop the opposition in such wise that the harmony shall reappear at the *dénouement*. How far this dissonance may be carried will be determined by the requirements of each particular Art. That representation which is addressed immediately to the mind can endure these heart-rending scenes better than that which addresses the senses. Here poetry has greatly the advantage over painting, and still more over sculpture. It is shocking in this last Art to maintain the hideous for itself, if there is any means to neutralize the effect. How this is neutralized in the case of the Laocoön will appear later on.

Even as to the actions themselves rendered necessary by the collision, there is for Art but a limited number. It can only run through the necessary circle traced for it by the Idea. In this respect there are three principal points to consider: (1) The general potencies which constitute the basis and the end of Art; (2) the development of these powers in the persons of the individuals placed upon the scene; and (3) when these two points of view unite to form what we call *character*.

These general, universal and eternal potencies constitute the spiritual in man. They are the essential impulses and needs of the human soul, which has to develop itself individually and socially. They are not God himself, but the children of the absolute Idea, whence they derive the force which makes them prevail in the world. Since they are determined

they cannot but come in collision, but in spite of this opposition they, each of them, enclose in themselves something essentially true. The grand motive principles in Art are the principles of religion and morality; of the family, the state, the Church; of glory, friendship, etc.; and particularly in Romantic Art, of honor and love. These principles differ, without doubt, in the degree of their moral worth, but all participate in rationality. There are, indeed, other potencies which are opposed to these legitimate ones, the potencies of evil or the negative principle; but that which is purely negative cannot appear in the ideal representation of action as the essential cause of the reaction. The end of evil is something null, and the contradiction of this, as an originating principle, does not allow of a beauty pure in its form. Cruelty, wretchedness, violence, are allowable in a representation only when they are alleviated by the grandeur of the character, and the end he has in view. Perversity, envy, baseness, are only repulsive. The devil himself is a bad æsthetic figure with which Art has nothing to do, for he is deceit itself, and thus a personage highly prosaic. The great poets and artists of antiquity never present us the spectacle of pure wickedness.

[Art can only make wicked characters interesting by letting be seen in them the evidence or the possibility of something good, thus an inward collision. Pure evil is empty, solitary, refusing all fellowship. Milton's Satan has noble traits. There is a background of good in Iago. He is not without the



craving for sympathy. Even Mephistopheles desires fellowship in his negative attitude, and in his very enjoyment of others' misfortunes betrays a profound sympathy with them.]

Action, then, can only represent the Ideal as found in the legitimate and true potencies which govern the world. These should not appear, however, in their abstract character, but clothed in the form of individualities. But this ought not to be carried so far as to convert these into mere arbitrary creations of the imagination, and make of them existences having no conscience of their individuality, for then these general potencies fall into the labyrinth of finite things. The Greek divinities, no matter in what activities they are engaged, still maintain a reserve of calm. They never go so far as to center upon any one fixed end all their energy of passion and perseverance of character, nor so far as to be overwhelmed in defeat. They interpose here and there in human affairs, embracing some particular cause. They allow the action to complete itself, and retire again to enjoy their felicity upon the summits of Olympus.

In modern Art there is also to be seen the conception of these potencies, determined yet general. However, these are, for the most part, pale and cold allegories of hate, envy, ambition, faith, hope, love, etc., personifications in which we have no belief. In a true work of Art we are truly interested when the sentiments of the human heart show themselves in a concrete and living manner. These abstractions



have no reality in themselves. Even the angels have no independent existence, as have Mars or Apollo.\* The imagination represents them, it is true, but only as ministers of the Divine potency, which disseminates itself throughout these subordinate instrumentalities. In Art they are these, or they identify themselves completely with human affairs.

While it concerns itself only with the higher potencies which appear under the form Divine, Art can easily maintain itself under the conditions of the Ideal, but as soon as the action commences, a difficulty arises. Although these potencies give the impulse to the action, this is still human action. We have here two terms to conciliate. On the one side these potencies, in their independent and abstract existence; on the other, the human individualities, who have not only to act, but to deliberate and resolve. Though these eternal powers, which govern the world, are immanent in the soul of man, and constitute the essence of his character, they appear outside the subject and in relations external to him. If they are represented as independent, irresistible powers, entirely external, all is prosaic. The god orders, the man can but obey, and the heroic character disappears. The greatest poets have not escaped entirely this fault, as in the *dénouement* of the Philoctetus of Sophocles, or where, in the Iliad, Mercury conducts Priam to the feet of Achilles, and

\* Hegel does not seem to have studied carefully Milton's Paradise Lost, or he would have noted his attempt to make angelic characters concrete and living.

elsewhere. The Epos may have larger liberty in this matter than the Drama, but the poet should ever use it with extreme caution, for this situation has the absurd consequence that the poet's heroes are no heroes.

In the true poetic conformity to the Ideal, the identity of gods and men should be perceived and maintained. That which is attributed to the gods ought, at the same time, to appear to emanate from the intimate nature of the individual, so that the superior powers which dominate the action, though personified and individualized, yet show themselves present in the mind of the man, and as constituting his character. The heart of man reveals itself in his gods, who are general forms, personifications of the grand motives which solicit him and govern him in the depths of his soul: as when we hear said by the ancients that Venus and Love have subjected the heart of some one to their empire. Love is, indeed, a potency exterior to man, but is also a passion which belongs to man himself. The Eumenides are avenging furies which pursue, externally, the murderer, but they are also the internal fury which inhabits the guilty heart. In Homer, the action of the gods is so contrived as to seem to come at the same time from within and from without, as when Achilles, in the heat of the dispute with Agamemnon, would draw his sword against him, Minerva advances behind him and, visible only to the hero, seizes him by his sunny locks. Juno, who was interested equally in both, had sent her, and her coming seems entirely

independent of the feeling which Achilles is experiencing at the moment. But it is easy to be seen, on the other hand, that Minerva, who thus suddenly is present, is only that same second and prudential thought which arrests the fury of the young warrior in an internal manner, and that the entire scene is a process in the heart of Achilles.

Christian subjects are, in this respect, less happy than those of antique Art. In the sacred legends of Christendom, the apparition of Christ, or the Saint, is furnished, it is true, by the current belief, and may be adequately treated in accordance with this canon of criticism; but, besides this, we see introduced a crowd of fantastic beings, sorcerers, spectres, etc., powers strange to man, having no correspondence in his nature, and that he, without power to resist their enchantments, is perpetually their dupe and their sport. They are only absurd conceptions, which have no right to enter a representation that has a high poetic aim. The artist should never forget that his characters, to awaken the highest dramatic interest, should never lose their freedom, and the independence of their determinations. Shakespeare is not at fault in this respect. The witches in Macbeth appear, indeed, as powers who decide in advance the destiny of the prince, but that which they predict is but the most secret and personal desire of his own heart, which is thus, by the poet, objectified. The apparition of the ghost in Hamlet, considered solely as a form of presentiment in Ham-



let himself, has still more beauty and a profounder truth.

We should distinguish, for the heroic character, between *passion* and *pathos*. Passion always brings with it the notion of something passive, hence low and contemptible. We exact that a man, to win our respect, must not allow himself to be driven by his passions. Pathos, on the contrary, excludes all notion of the interested or the blameworthy. The sacred love of Antigone for her brother is an example of pathos, in the Greek signification of the term. It is conceived as a power of the soul, essentially good and just, and which implies the eternal principles of reason and free will. So Orestes does not kill his mother by one of those movements of the soul which we denominate a passion, but the pathos which drives him to this action is a motive not less clear than legitimate. We cannot, however, attribute pathos to the gods. If they descend into human quarrels and combats, there is either, as we have said before, nothing profoundly serious in their participation, or else these combats are to be taken in an allegorical sense, as a general war among the gods themselves. Pathos, then, should be presented only as a motive in the actions of men. But thus it belongs to the true domain of Art. It strikes a chord existing in the heart of every man, and he responds with sympathy, more or less. And all the exterior surroundings, the apparatus of forms borrowed from nature, should correspond, and be used as accessory means to sustain the pathetic principle.

Thus nature may be employed as essentially symbolic. Landscape, for example, though a kind of Art inferior in kind to historic painting, may be made to echo the common sentiment, and to produce a pathetic impression.

Pathos, in its living activity, is *character*. This unites in itself all the moments spoken of hitherto, and may be considered under three different aspects: (1) As an individual embracing a totality of qualities, which constitutes *richness* of character. (2) This totality ought to appear under a particular form. The character should be *determined*. (3) Character, as being a unity, is thus the outgrowth of, if not identical with, the particular idea or *schema* of the personality. Limits not to be transcended and fixity are the consequence.

The heart of man is something grand and vast. In his consciousness he carries many sides; indeed, all the powers which form the circle of divinities. Thus, as the Greek mind developed, and they knew more of man, their gods multiplied, and at the same time became more fragmentary, less distinct, and deprived of individual freedom. Character in Art may derive from the same fecundity. If a nature is represented as complete and personal, yet absorbed in a sole passion, it appears either feeble or perverse. In Homer, for instance, Achilles is the youngest hero, but his juvenile force lacks none of the human qualities, and this rich multiplicity is developed in situations the most diverse. He loves his mother Thetis. He weeps over the robbery of Briseis. His

wounded honor drags him into a quarrel with Agamemnon. He is the faithful friend of Patroclus;—and yet a young man impetuous and fiery, swift in the race, brave, yet full of respect for old age. It is the same with the other Homeric characters. Each of them is entirely complete, a world in itself, each a living humanity, and not a kind of allegorical abstraction of some particular trait. Such a multiplicity can alone give vitality to a character, but all these elements should appear reunited, and related so as to form one sole subject, and not a mere disintegrated crowd of diverse tendencies. The character should penetrate all the various traits of the human heart, show itself there, but not exhaust itself in any particular trait, preserve in this group of interests, motives, qualities, an idiosyncratic personality, never inconsistent with itself. For this complete characterization epic poetry is the fittest.

2. But Art is not confined to thus representing the character in the totality of its elements. Since it is concerned here with the Ideal in its determination, the character may be, also, *particular*; that is, some particular sentiment may form the predominant trait. Dramatic poetry, especially, exacts this particularity. The whole potentialities need not to be developed, as they may be in the Epos, but may remain implicit. Dramatic interest requires that the personage shall have some fixed purpose to which relate all his resolutions and actions. If, however, this simplicity be carried so far as to give us a void in the individual, in order to leave room for nothing



more than the abstract form of some sentiment, as love, honor, etc., then all vitality, all personality is lost. The representation becomes cold, dry, and poor. Some principal element ought, rather, to appear as dominant, but at the same time not to exclude the fecundity of life. The field should be left so free, that the individual may show himself in situations numerous enough to develop or, at least, furnish a hint of the potentialities of a cultivated nature, one constructed on a scale grand enough to be interesting. The personages of Sophocles present this lofty vitality, notwithstanding the simplicity of the sentiment which is made predominantly actuating. One might compare them, in the perfection of their plastic beauty, to the creations of Sculpture. For Sculpture can likewise, while preserving its unique character, express its thought in a multiplicity of elements. In opposition to the principal passion which exhibits itself as the chief point of interest, it represents, it is true, all the internal forces in their repose; but this unalterable unity need not be bounded by the one simple passion in question. It allows to be seen, in its beauty, the possibility of the display of other proclivities. In painting, poetry and music it is still more needful that this interior multiplicity should be represented, or implied. Thus, in *Romeo and Juliet*, love is their predominant passion, but they develop in the divers situations in which they are placed, and in their connections with the other personages of the drama, a crowd of other qualities which reveal the depth and richness of their characters.

But these are still penetrated and unified by one sole sentiment, by the force of the love which has taken possession of them, and which appears as a limitless sea, so that Juliet can say,—“The more I give, the more I possess.” To the reasoning faculty such a diversity, notwithstanding the domination of a unique element, may appear an inconsequence. It may ask,—how can Achilles, who shows so tender a heart to a father and a friend, have such a cruel thirst for vengeance as to drag the body of Hector around the walls of Troy? But in the regard of reason itself, which seizes things in their complete nature, this inconsequence is the consequent and the true itself; for this man is precisely so made that this very contradiction arises from the synthesis of his traits.

But the character should, none the less, identify with its proper personality the particular idea which it represents. This one sentiment should draw all other traits to itself, and tinge them with its own coloring. If there is any incoherence, the multiplicity of traits loses all meaning. To accomplish this self-consistent and sustained unity is the prerogative and the triumph of Art.

Some productions of modern times sin against this principle. In the “Cid” of Corneille we find in individuals simply an internal combat in which passage is made arbitrarily from one sentiment to another, with no effort to make them consist with each other.

3. But inasmuch as this character, all complete in

himself, is to enter into external relations, what possibilities and what limits do the laws of Art require for this? On all sides the Ideal comes in contact with the common reality, with all the prose of life. If one should adopt, on this subject, the nebulous conception of the Ideal held by some in modern times, one might think that Art ought to rupture all connection with the world of the relative and the finite, under the pretext that what belongs to the external reality is something completely indifferent, and in its opposition to the internal world, something low and trivial. In this sense Art should be regarded as a spiritual power which lifts us above the needs of life, and liberates us from all dependence. But to attain such an end as this, one must retire into the internal world of conscience, and there, in an absolute inaction, full of himself, and of his own lofty wisdom, turn his regard unceasingly toward the heavens, and affect, or attempt to despise, terrestrial things. But the Ideal cannot rest in a sphere so vague. Its central essence is activity. Man is a living being, rich and interesting only in the number and variety of his active relations. Art must seize this activity, not in a general manner, but exhibit it so determined as to bring about a reaction. To explicate the manner in which it should deal with this necessity, we have these three different points of view: (1) the abstract form of the external reality; (2) the accord of the Ideal in its concrete existence with this external reality, and (3)



the external form of the Ideal in its relations with the public.

1. A work of art represents the Ideal by a determined situation, a particular action, and in an individual character, and all addressed to the senses. Thus is created a new world, the world of Art. As thus to be externally represented, it finds itself under the same laws which are detected in the Beautiful in nature, *e. g.*, regularity, symmetry, and conformity to law. Regularity and symmetry, in their abstract character, however, contrast with the vitality which lifts itself in its perfect freedom above the necessity of such symmetry. In music, for instance, regularity is concealed, or sunk to become the basis of the whole. In architecture, it and symmetry become the essential aims. The edifice does not claim to be complete in itself. It exists for another than itself, for whom it serves as a dwelling or an ornament, whether man or the statue of the god. It ought not, then, to monopolize all the attention upon itself, and its regularity and symmetry are aids to the mind to comprehend its design and meaning. (There is no question here about the symbolic forms with which architects may ornament their edifices.) It is the same in the Art of Landscape; for in gardens, as in edifices, man is the principal thing. So, too, regularity and symmetry may find place in painting, in the manner of grouping the figures; but in this Art, life and mind may penetrate still more profoundly the exterior manifestation, and as this Art advances, it is less bound by these laws. In Music and Poetry, again,

regularity and symmetry resume their importance. The physiological limitations of sound furnish a bound which cannot be passed. Things contiguous in space can all be seen in the same glance of the eye; but in time the existing moment expires upon its successor. The regularity of measure has for its end to give some fixity for the imagination to these temporal moments. There is in measure a magic power from which we can so little defend ourselves, that often, without knowing it, we mark the cadence. Indeed, this return of the same intervals after a fixed rule is not merely something that belongs to sounds and their duration in themselves. Simple Sound, and Time in itself, are indifferent to this regular mode of division and repetition. Measure appears, then, as a pure creation of the spirit. It awakens the consciousness and the immediate certitude of something essentially subjective, of our identity and our interior unity, which reveal themselves to us in all variety and multiplicity of phenomena. Measure finds thus an echo in the depth of the soul. Nevertheless, it is not as the expression of the spirit that sounds, in this relation, move us so profoundly, nor is it only as simple sounds. It is rather this abstract unity imparted by imagination that responds to the unity of the subject himself.

The same principle applies to the measure of the verse, and the rhyme, in Poetry. Regularity and symmetry are here the law which presides at the arrangement of the words, and this external form is absolutely necessary. Indeed, the sensible ele-

ment here finds and claims its proper sphere and function, and shows itself to be something quite other than the expression of common sentiments, for which the duration of sounds is something indifferent or arbitrary.

Regularity and symmetry belong solely to the category of *quantity*. That which does not belong to this has no need of these laws and restraints. Harmony, for instance, does not belong to quantity. It has its principle in the differences which belong essentially to *quality*. These differences, instead of maintaining their opposition toward each other, ought to form an accord among themselves. In music, the relation between the *tonic*, the *mediant*, and the *dominant* is not purely a relation of quantity. The difference resides essentially in the sounds themselves, which nevertheless harmonize together without allowing their determined character to be exhibited in the form of a sharp contrast and disagreeable opposition. On the contrary, the dissonances have to be reconciled. The same is true in the harmony of colors. Art requires that in a picture they shall not be associated in the form of a mere motley, nor so combined that their opposition is effaced. They ought to be so conciliated that the entire expression should reveal an accord full of unity. Thus is harmony capable of expressing the Ideal in a form still more spiritual.

2. The accord of the concrete Ideal with the external reality (man with nature) may be considered under three different points of view. *First*, it may



appear simply as an internal relation, a hidden bond uniting man with his environment. *Secondly*, it may appear as emanating from the human activity, and as produced by it. *Lastly*, the world created by the spirit of man may constitute in its turn a complete system which, in its real existence, shall form a totality of external objects with which the individuals who move upon this theater should be in harmony.

(1.) The environment of the ideal person does not appear here as the creation of the human spirit, but only as external nature. Physical nature shows us a form determined in all its relations. These, its rights, should not be contemned in a work of Art, but should be given with scrupulous fidelity; which can be done without disregarding the difference between the real and the ideal. In general, the great masters thus represent nature. Homer, though he gives us nothing representing modern descriptions of nature, does make of the Scamander, or the Simois, of the shores and the gulfs of the sea, pictures so exact that this same country has been in our day recognized as geographically similar to that in his description.

The particular Arts are, of course, here bound by the capabilities of the material with which they deal. Sculpture, on account of the repose and less richly determined character of its figures, cannot here attain the same degree of particularization with the other Arts. The environing nature can only be given in the drapery, the ornaments of the hair, the arms, the support, etc.

Lyric Poetry, opposed in this respect to Sculpture, represents only the interior sentiments of the soul. When, then, it would employ the images of external nature, it has no need to make an exact and detailed description. The Epos, on the contrary, recounting positive facts, the places where they have occurred, and the manner of their doing, is, of all kinds of Poetry, most obliged to make precise descriptions of the localities of its scenes. Likewise Painting, evidently, can go farther than all the other Arts in this particularization.

However, this external fidelity ought not to be carried, in any Art, so far as to reproduce the prose of nature, or lose itself in a mere servile imitation. It is still less permitted to the artist to make it his chief object, and to subordinate to it the personages and the circumstances of the action. The exterior, here, should appear only in its harmony with the interior element, and not as an independent existence. [Against this canon many modern landscapes sin; in which intensest human action is subordinated intentionally to the impression given to the surrounding nature. If the interest intended is in the human activity, the environment should not be overwhelming, but only used to harmonize with the action and heighten the human interest. If the landscape is the chief thing, the figures in it should be small, and placed mainly in passive rather than in active attitudes, or, at any rate, as drawn by the predominant nature into a kind of physical accord.]

An exquisite adjustment of the two elements is

here required, and is possible, for which no rules can be given, but which, when existing, is readily recognized. The Arab makes but one with the nature which environs him,—with his skies, his stars, his burning deserts, his camels, and his horse. There is no home for him but in this climate, under this sun.

(2.) But the environing nature can also be given as the result of human activity and intelligence. Man may humanize much that environs him. He may show that whatever exists on the planet was made for him, and is incapable, in the face of him, of preserving an existence entirely independent. Man is, indeed, dependent upon nature, but this dependence, this limitation of freedom, is incompatible with the Ideal. To be the object of the representations of Art, man ought to be freed from this bondage. This conciliation can be made in two ways. Nature can be shown as in peace with man, his friend, and herself furnishing liberally whatever he demands, and instead of arresting or hindering him, as everywhere forestalling his wishes. Or,—Man may be represented as procuring by his own proper activity whatever he needs, as appropriating nature for his designs, as smoothing away her obstacles by his genius and skill, and thus as transforming the external world and making it suitable to his requirements. The conciliation is most perfect when the industry of man is seconded by nature, and in place of a conflict which makes prominent the dependence of both, both present the spectacle of a happy accord. From



this point of view misery and want ought to be banished from the domain of Art, without, however, effacing completely the necessities of human life, for these are the conditions of finite existence, and Art cannot escape from the finite. Her task is solely to efface the contradiction in idea, to conciliate the physically evil with the true and the good. Man gives to the gods themselves his clothing and his arms. He represents them as submitted to the needs of terrestrial existence, and as not disdaining to satisfy them. This principle, profoundly apprehended, presents two distinct points of view.

First,—The objects of nature can be employed to satisfy a need purely contemplative. The ornaments of the human person, or the magnificence which may be made to surround him, find here their place. He lets it be seen, then, that all which nature furnishes as most precious and beautiful, most capable of arresting regard,—gold, precious stones, ivory, rich vestments,—have nothing interesting in themselves, but draw their value from something that he loves and reverences. He chooses for this effect, principally, that which already possesses in itself an external beauty,—colors brilliant and pure, the polished and resplendent surface of metals, fine woods, marble, etc. The temples of the gods and the palaces of monarchs everywhere illustrate this pomp and splendor. The peoples delight to behold in their divinities the spectacle of their own riches; they love to contemplate the magnificence which surrounds their princes, because it is their own, and

they have but lent it. One might, indeed, complain of this sort of costly play on moral grounds. All this, it may be said, might have been given to the poor. In times of great need it has been often so given. Art is very costly. How much wealth is paying no money interest in the great galleries! But, after all that might be said of this kind, it is to be remembered that the moral and the pathetic only produce their effect upon man when he is reminded of the miseries and necessities of life,—the very things which it is required that Art should withdraw from his consideration. The glory of a people is to be had precisely at this price, that it has consecrated its treasures to a species of delights which are lifted above the sphere of need, and claim for themselves a noble prodigality.

Secondly,—Besides this ornamental function, the external things are used by man for practical ends. This is the prose of existence. How far, then, may this be represented conformably to the exigencies of Art? The most natural and simple manner by which art has sought to escape this class of physical needs is the conception of *the age of gold*, or the idyllic state. Here nature supplies man's wants without giving him pain, or requiring labor; and he, on his side, contents himself with what she supplies. All the passions which are born of ambition and avarice, and which degrade a more advanced social state, are now slumbering and silent. At first glance such a situation has an ideal color, and certain limited ranges of Art may be content with it; but on closer



survey such an existence seems a little wearisome. Man cannot rest in this narrow and poor field for his capacities. He is born for work, and whatever be the end toward which any natural impulse may propel him, he ought to seek to gain it by his own free activity solely. Thus man's physical needs may claim a larger sphere than the Idyll allows. They may be used to exhibit his internal force, and his highest faculties. Nevertheless, the harmony of the external and the internal must not be sacrificed. There is nothing more repulsive in Art than to show physical need carried to its utmost extremity. Dante, for instance, speaking of the death of Ugolino from the torments of hunger, describes it in two thrilling strokes,—while Gerstenberg, in his tragedy of the same name, enlarges and revels in all the possibilities of horrid description.

Our highly complicated social state is very unsuitable for the realization of the Ideal. The state, the party, is everything,—the individual is little or nothing. The existing condition must be broken up ere there is room for the display of the heroic. Something between the idyllic state and that of advanced civilization is most suitable for the purposes of Art. In such epochs man is not reduced to the poverty of interests and intellectual enjoyments which characterizes the world of the Idyll. He is moved by passions more profound, he pursues ends more elevated, yet the objects which touch him, and serve for his needs, are his own proper work. His nourishment is simple, and thus less prosaic (milk,

honey, wine, etc.); while such beverages as tea, coffee and liquors remind us of the complicated processes needful to bring them to our lips. The heroes themselves slay the animal, and cook it, which is to serve for their feast. They break the horse which they are to mount. They themselves make all the arms and implements they use, or, at least, know how they should be made. Thus man recognizes in all which serves for his use his own proper creations. Yet this productive activity, which gives to material objects a form appropriate to his needs, need not appear as a painful effort, but rather as an easy and agreeable labor, which encounters no obstacle, and which failure never disheartens. In Homer we find just such a state of things. The scepter of Agamemnon is a staff which his ancestor had cut and transmitted to his descendants. Ulysses had fashioned with his own hands his nuptial couch, and if the arms of Achilles are not of his own workmanship, yet the numerous and complicated details of their fabrication had been laid out beforehand for Vulcan to execute. We see everywhere the freshness and joy of a novel possession, the fruit of one's own proper skill. Thus all these material objects are lifted above the level of common things, and are penetrated by spirituality.

(3.) But there is still another order of external realities which environ the individual, and with which he is obliged to live in intimate relation; those, namely, which constitute the moral world,—religion, laws, manners, mode of social organization,

the state, the family, public and private life; for the ideal character must not be represented as satisfying physical needs solely, but in the pursuit of the proper interests of the world of spirit, by which he is closely bound. How Art may keep itself in harmonious accord, here, will be considered in another part of this work.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ART IN RELATION TO THE PUBLIC.

HOWEVER harmonious and complete a work of Art may be in itself, it does not exist for itself, but for the public which contemplates and enjoys it. The actors in a drama do not speak solely to themselves, but also to the spectators whom they seek to inform. And in a work of Art of any kind there is between it and the man in face of it a kind of dialogue. Doubtless, the true Ideal, dealing with universal passion, is intelligible to all the world; but nevertheless the exterior setting in a work of Art must be so treated as to be intelligible to its particular audience. Artists almost always borrow their subjects from the past, finding in that the great advantage of addressing themselves to memory, which furnishes matter in that character of generality of which Art has need. But the artist still belongs to his own time, of which he shares the ideas and the manners. The exterior forms of a past civilization, from which he has borrowed his matter, may be treated *objectively*, that is, in strict conformity to what they were in themselves, in historic reality; or *subjectively*, that is, adapted to the intellectual culture, the manners, and the whole spirit of the epoch in which the work of Art is produced,

These two principles carried out exclusively, conduct to two extremes equally false. In the conciliation of the two, only, is to be found the true mode of artistic representation.

The subjective mode, when exclusive, takes away from the past its real and original form, and in the stead substitutes the present manner of conceiving, reserving only the nomenclature of the past. This fault may arise from ignorance of the past, or doubtfulness, in the artist, of his own correct knowledge of it, or inability to perceive the inconsistency. The highest degree of this kind of naïveté is to be found in the works of Hans Sachs, who makes of our Lord, of God the Father, of Adam and Eve, and the patriarchs, very fresh and lively portraits, but they are still only in the guise of the burgesses of Nuremberg. God the Father instructs the children of Adam after the manner of a modern schoolmaster.

This mode of dealing with the subject may come not only from ignorance, but from a cause precisely opposite,—from the conceit, which over-refined yet not profound culture produces, of the supreme excellence of the present mode of thinking and speaking; a kind of fault much to be found among the French. Everything but the contemporary style is thought to be in bad taste and barbarous. Hence the classic French authors have felt or affected disgust for all alien literature, and have only with difficulty familiarized themselves with Shakespeare. In order to make his dramas acceptable to the French public, they had to be retrenched and corrected to be adapted



to this taste. And in Voltaire we find heroes of the Chinese, Americans, Greeks or Romans, all speaking like French courtiers. Achilles, in Racine's *Iphigenia in Aulis*, talks and acts like a French prince. He has nothing of Achilles but the name. And history has often been written in France, not so much for historic truthfulness in itself, as in the interest of the existing situation, to give a lesson to the rulers, or to satirize the government.\*

In the objective mode, on the contrary, the effort is to revive the past, to preserve as much as possible its original and local character by reproducing all its details. The Germans have been partial to this mode, and have traced with great exactness the usages of different ages and peoples. They have had the necessary patience to identify themselves, through careful study, with the modes of thinking and feeling of other nations, and have found interest in noting minute facts. But in Art, this mode, if exclusive, gives us only the form, and leaves out of view the soul of the whole, as well as disregards the degree of intellectual culture and the special feeling of the immediate spectators. How, then, may both these requirements be put in satisfactory accord, and the work be both objective and subjective?

The historic exactitude ought to be the subordinate element, and so dealt with as to adapt the whole performance to all times, and many kinds and degrees of culture. Yet this, too, has its limitation, and if

\*Certainly, during the last two decades French literature and Art have largely emancipated themselves from this narrowness.

carried too far, and adapted to too ordinary capacity, the work will become prosaic. The past may be so studied as to bring out its deeper characteristics, which find sympathy with the more limited and highly cultured audience. Thus, since the study of ancient literature, Art and religion form the basis of our modern education, already at school we become acquainted with the Greek divinities, and the fabled heroes, and principal historic figures, and we can share the ideas and interests of these, at least in imagination. And in the religious conceptions of all peoples there is something common, which we can detect and feel. But the determined element in these religious conceptions is something that has become foreign to our modern consciousness. We have no interest in invocations to Jupiter, or in oracles and visions. And the past, in history, does not interest us as such. To become ours it must connect itself somehow with our own time, so that we can regard the present as its continuation, and the whole course of events as an unbroken chain. In the poem of the *Nibelungen* we are on the soil of our common country, but the characters are so out of all connection with our actual civilization, that even with the greatest erudition we do not recognize ourselves therein any more than we do in the poems of Homer.

Works of Art should not be composed to furnish objects requiring erudition. They ought to be immediately comprehended and enjoyed, without all this apparel of knowledges more or less strange. Art is not destined for a little privileged circle of *savants*,

but for the entire people, for the common heart, or at least for ordinary culture. We should feel ourselves at home in it, and not in a strange and unintelligible world. Subjects, then, borrowed from the past ought to be treated in harmony with the ideas of the present. All national subjects with which we have not yet lost our sympathy may be so treated. The Indian Epics, the Songs of Homer, the Dramatic Poetry of the Greeks, the *Cid* of the Spaniards, the *Jerusalem Delivered* of Tasso, the *Lusiad* of Camoens, the historic plays of Shakespeare, and Voltaire's *Henriade*, were such. But Art may go beyond these, since the nations communicate with each other, and as time goes on are more and more closely tied. But if the poet will bring far-off ages into our presence, the historic side should be subordinated to the fundamental idea, and appear in itself only accessory, as simply destined to express the common human nature.

The thing to be attained is to make the idea immediately comprehensible, so that any people may recognize it with equal ease. It is in this spirit of nationality that Shakespeare has given to the many foreign subjects of which he has treated the impress of the English character, while at the same time preserving the historic traits of the other peoples. The Greek tragedians had in their minds the time in which they lived and the city to which they belonged. The *Œdipus Tyrannus* is an Athenian tragedy, and the *Eumenides* of *Æschylus* had a national interest.



The Greek Mythology, notwithstanding the constant use of it, has never, since the *renaissance* of letters, been able to seem natural. It seems almost absurd that a modern sculptor should give us a statue of Venus, or a poet a poem in her honor.

To be interesting to the common heart, the artist must use this far-off material only as the framework or outline of his pictures, and his aim should be to put the fundamental idea in harmony with the spirit of the age and the genius of his nation. But the necessity of doing this does not impose upon the different Arts precisely the same conditions. Lyric Poetry, for instance, may dispense most easily with the historic accessories, because its principal aim is to express the movements of the soul. The Epos, on the other hand, is that sort which requires the most ample reproduction of the same. Here the historic particulars themselves, if they can be clearly recounted, interest us most vividly. But this external element is a dangerous rock for Dramatic Poetry; and for the purposes of representation in the theatre it is often necessary to retrench and modify, for the people will not endeavor to understand what is out of their sympathy.

In this necessity to adapt the past to contemporary needs is the excuse for what is called *anachronism*. But this need not go beyond the mere external circumstances. When Falstaff speaks of *pistols*, that is indifferent. The fault would be more grave if Orpheus should be represented with a violin in his hand. Such an instrument, whose modern invention

is known to all, transported into the mythologic ages, offers a contradiction which displeases. [The trumpets and the violins which Fra Angelico, Perugino and Raphael put into the hands of their angels, etc., have their justification only when regarded as symbols, where all,—the wings, and even the bodies and drapery,—are symbolic. The later taste has declined such things as now of doubtful interest.] An anachronism more important exists where the personages are made to express sentiments and ideas, and commit deeds, that were plainly impossible at the epoch when they flourished. It is contended that this is a sin against the *natural*; but the exactions of the natural cannot be carried through thus absolutely, or, if so, bring about false consequences; for the artist may give us a true delineation of character without preserving all the details of familiar life. He need not be untrue to the essential passions of the human heart on account of such anachronism. At the epoch of the Trojan war, the forms of thinking were very different from those we find at the time the Iliad was written. The people in general, and the chiefs of the ancient royal families of Greece, did not speak as do the personages of Æschylus, and still less did they approach the beauty of the characters we so much admire in Sophocles. Thus to violate the laws of the natural is a necessary anachronism in Art. But these alterations present quite another character when the religious and moral conceptions of a civilization more advanced are introduced into an epoch, or among a people where the



ideas are entirely different, or in contradiction to them. To give an example: this profound return of the conscience upon itself which precedes the moral determination, or remorse with its tortures, belongs to the moral culture of modern times. The heroic character is ignorant of such experiences. It does not recall to brood over and torture itself about an action irrevocably accomplished. Orestes has no remorse for having killed his mother. The avenging furies of the action itself pursue him, it is true, but the Eumenides are represented as general powers. We do not recognize in them those internal serpents which devour the heart of the culpable. If the artist has detected the essential spirit of the age with which he deals, he will not misrepresent it by this kind of anachronism. If this essential characteristic is given in a suitable framework, a particular subject well developed, his production will have true objectivity whether the external particularities are historically exact or not. Then a work of Art speaks to our inmost soul, confounds itself with us, and becomes our own. It will have beauty, though the form be borrowed from ages long gone, when its basis is human nature itself. This is the invariable and permanent element. The historic element is the perishable one. The Psalms of David, which ring the changes in the human heart, or the profound grief of the prophets, have for us to-day the same truth, and an interest always present, though Babylon and Zion exist no longer.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE ARTIST.

HEGEL next considers the function and the activity of the *Artist*: 1, to fix the true notion of his *genius* and of his *inspiration*; 2, to examine his creative activity on its objective side; 3, to derive from the conciliation of these two the character of true *originality*.

The question of genius must be treated in a special manner, seeing that it is an expression not confined to the artist, but employed concerning great captains, and rulers, and the masters of science. Here the question is as to the nature of *imagination*. By this term is not meant merely the representative power to recall the images of things or acts which have been passively perceived; it is rather an active and creative power. This power to create presupposes a natural gift, a sharpened sense in perceiving the reality of things under its diverse forms, an attention which, without cessation, watches everything that strikes the eyes and the ears, engraves upon the memory the images of things, and preserves them in all their variety and unchanging accuracy. The artist, then, must not confine himself to the colorless region of the pure ideal, but go out of himself to find and fasten manifold relations to the real

world. Any defect in his work which shows him to have dwelt in the region of abstractions only, and that his gaze has been wholly introverted, arouses suspicion. It is from the inexhaustible treasures of living nature that the artist should draw the matter of his creations. It is not with Art as with philosophy. It is not the pure thought, but the external form of the real which furnishes the element of production. The artist ought, then, to have lived in this element. It is needful that he should have seen much, have heard much, and remembered much (for, in general, great intelligences have almost always possessed fine memories); in short, all that interests man should remain engraven on the soul of the poet. A profound mind extends its curiosity to an infinite number of objects. Goethe, for example, commenced thus, and during his whole life never ceased to widen the circle of his observations. This natural gift, this capacity to interest one's self in everything, to seize the particular element of objects and their real forms, as well as the ability to retain all that one has observed, is the prime condition of artistic genius. To a sufficient knowledge of the forms of the external world should be joined that of the inner nature of man, of the passions which agitate his heart, and all the designs which his will sets for his activity. And besides this double knowledge, he should know how the spiritual principle expresses itself in the sensible reality and the external world.

But all this does not define the function of imagi-

nation. In order that a work of Art may be truly ideal, it is not sufficient that the spirit, such as we find it immediately in ourselves, should reveal itself in a visible reality. It is the *universal* spirit, the absolute truth, the rational principle of things which ought to appear in the representation. But this idea, which is thus the basis, the underlying soul of the particular subject which the artist has chosen, should not only be present in his thought, moving and inspiring it, but he ought to have meditated it in all its depth and extent, for without such reflection man does not succeed in knowing rightly that which is within himself. We cannot but conclude that in all the great compositions of Art the subject has been maturely studied in all its aspects, and long and profoundly meditated. From a feeble imagination no powerful work can ever spring. It is not necessary, then, that the artist should be a philosopher, and if he thinks in the philosophic manner, he produces a work precisely opposed to the work of Art, as to the form under which the Idea should appear; for the function of imagination is to reveal to our mind the essence of things, not as a principle or general conception, but in a concrete form, and in an individual reality. Consequently, whatever be living and fermenting in the soul, he must still represent it by the images and sensible appearances which he has gathered, while at the same time he is such a master in the use of these, as by them to express the truth that is in him in a perfect manner. In this intellectual work, which consists in welding



and confounding together the rational element and the sensible form, the artist has need both of fine sensibilities and watchful thought. It is, then, a gross error to believe that poems like those of Homer have been formed, like a dream, during the poet's sleep. It is ridiculous to think that the true artist does not know what he is about.

The artist must not only have penetrated to the essence of external things, and identified them with himself, but must also have lived in and noted by the same imaginative process all the impulses and aims and activities of the human soul. He should have lived much before he is fit to reveal the mysteries of life. However genius may show itself in its effervescence in youth, as with Schiller and Goethe, it is only in mature age that a work of Art in its true perfection can be produced. This productive imagination, by which the artist represents an idea under a sensible form in a work of his own personal creation, is what is called genius, talent, etc.; but for genius is required not only the abstract capacity for producing, but the necessary energy to design and execute, [*i.e.*, something more than sensibility and intellect are needed; strength of the will, also, stimulated by the attractiveness of the end. One may feel exquisitely, and think deeply and wisely, even poetically, yet have no impulse to produce, and we should not be authorized to assert genius in such a case.] The difference of disposition or character here is a profoundly subjective one, and has its own explanation, [perhaps, in the case of



strength of will, largely a physical or physiological one]. It is not the distinction of genius and talent, but irrespective of that. These are not identical, so that much talent may be said to constitute genius, but are in reality different ways of regarding things, though both are needful to constitute the perfect artist. For, since Art reveals conceptions in different forms, each particular Art requires its own particular talent. One may have the poetic conception, yet fail in adequately realizing it; and one may have much talent, yet his conceptions be but prosaic. Simple talent, confined to any narrow specialty, produces only the results of skillful execution.

Some say that both talent and genius are innate. This is both true and false; for man, as such, is also born for religion, for reflection, for science; he can elevate himself to the idea of God, and reach a formulated knowledge of things. For this end he needs only to have been formed by education and study. But it is otherwise for Art. This requires a disposition entirely special, in which one element, which comes only by nature, plays an essential part. He has to elaborate his thought not only in his intelligence, but his imagination must be at the same time in play, and he has to express his idea by some one of the various materials borrowed from the sensible world. This element, which comes from nature, cannot be sought and obtained. Men are very skillful to detect the difference between the easy attainments of special talent and the labored result of work dominated by reflection and experiment.

Thus on this side may genius and talent be said to be innate.

[With regard to the long and interesting disquisition above, I may remark that Hegel's treatment of *imagination* hardly amounts to a satisfactory definition. It is a synthetic, rather than an analytic, procedure. He has given this name to a congeries of qualities and modes of activity. If the human mind is a unit, and what we call its faculties are but its activity in special relations, and for particular ends, then we need to define more carefully the inward procedure deserving the name of imagination. Hegel has had in mind, not the pure activity, but the sum of special powers needed for the creative work of the artist. An attempt at a more discriminating definition will be found elsewhere in this book, and in a measure in what follows. And with regard to the difference between genius and talent, we do not find, either, an entirely satisfactory distinction. Perhaps variant opinions arise only from different uses of the words. An unusual ability to draw correctly from nature one may call *talent*, and another *genius*. There may be some fine talent wanting in the painter, as in the sense of color in its purity and harmony, and consequent failure to deal so with it as to produce any high excellence, yet his ability to delineate may be so marked, and his conceptions so original, that we should hesitate on this account to deny genius. Would the possession of all the talents constitute genius; or does any special ability, when coming naturally and working

spontaneously, and seeming to have no difficulties to overcome, deserve the name; and do we give the other appellation rightly when there is any sign of labor, or any evidence that the skill has been acquired by experiment and reflection? Or, is the difference more radical, and does it refer to the whole mode of conception?

Perhaps one may find the solution of this problem by disregarding the words, for the moment, and noting the facts only, the results of observation and introspection. There are undoubtedly special abilities, innate or easily acquired and improved, which are not always found together. There is also the native impulse, and corresponding yet variant ability to struggle after and to seize the essential unity of things, and of the movements in the universe, to co-ordinate them into an harmonious whole. But this latter process may be one of pure thinking, and therefore still *cold*; or it may be accompanied by *feeling* so intense as to crave and seek sympathy not only with the informing soul of the universe, but with its reflected intelligence, with men; and in the latter case, particularly, be impelled to expression. The former is the philosophic attitude, the latter the poetic one. Each coördinates and is satisfied only with self-consistency and harmony. But the philosopher deals with the abstract ideas of things, and works for the pure intellect; though, being human, he cannot rid himself entirely of teleological relations. The poet, on the other hand, feels, through his very vividness of imagination, his union with



mankind more acutely, and regards them as enjoying or suffering, and aspiring, as well as thinking entities, and deals, therefore, with concrete realities. For him the physical and social worlds claim attention and prominence, and are found full of adaptation to express, and color, and warm his conception of the profound and ideal harmony of the universe. This sense of the eternal beauty may be more or less keen and abiding, the craving for expression exist in various degrees, but the presence of it is a unique gift, and constitutes the *poet*, in any of the Arts; while the possession of the special abilities needed for expression, more or less in number and degree, will determine his relative rank and merit as an artist.

For the wise use of language it would seem best, therefore, to confine the word *genius* to mean this unifying, coördinating impulse, when carried to such expression and production as to be recognized and felt, whether poetic or philosophic; and to confine the word *talent* to mean the various capacities needed for the particular modes of expression to which also nature gives the impulse. Talent, then, may be innate, may be educated, may even be acquired with more or less difficulty. But it is doubtful whether the common usage of the terms will ever be entirely and accurately corrected, and made precise in this particular.]

The different Arts have a close connection with the national genius, as music with the Italians, sculpture and the most perfect form of the poem

with the Greeks, etc. Thus there is a facility of production and a technical skill which are inherited, and encouraged by the environment, though high excellence in any Art is only attained by study and prolonged application, which are required even for lofty genius, in order to smooth away the difficulties and produce perfect work. The born artist, however, vanquishes these more easily, since he has a natural inclination and an immediate need to give form to what he has experienced, and to everything in which his imagination has been busy; and that mode of expression which is most easy to him is the one he selects to express his thought. A musician cannot but manifest what moves him so deeply in melodious sounds and subtle harmonies. The painter so feels the beauty of form and the charm of color, that no other vehicle would content him so adequately. The poet chooses that vehicle of presentation,—words, the most perfect symbols of thought,—which makes his meaning known most quickly and perfectly. This gift of expression does not possess the artist solely as a faculty purely speculative, to imagine, and to feel, but also as a practical disposition, as a natural talent of execution. These two things always go together in the great artist. That which lives in his imagination comes likewise in some way through his fingers as naturally as it comes to us to speak what is in our mind, or as our sentiments appear immediately upon our countenance, attitudes, or gestures. Thus genius finds out how to render easy the exter-



nal part, the technical execution, and how to dominate materials to all appearance poor and rebellious.

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That condition of soul in which the artist finds himself when his imagination is in play, and when he is realizing his conceptions, is what is commonly called *inspiration*. Opinions as to the origin of this state of mind are very diverse.

And, first,—as genius in general results from the close union of two elements, one which exalts the mind, the other which belongs to nature; so it has been thought that inspiration likewise can be produced by sensible excitation; but, indeed, it is not a simple result of the warming of the blood. Life in the rural regions does not make one poetic. The greatest genius can issue forth to breathe the fresh air of the morning, or stretch himself at his ease upon the lawn, without on that account feeling any sweet inspiration insinuate itself into his soul. On the other hand, it can still less be evoked by reflection. He who proposes in advance to be inspired to make a poem or picture, or melody, without already having in himself the principle of a living excitement, and who is obliged to seek here and there for a subject, the need of which alone shall determine his choice, notwithstanding all his possible talent, will never be able to bring to the birth a beautiful conception and produce a work of Art which shall endure. To employ such means proves only that no true interest has stood ready to seize the soul and captivate the

imagination of this artist. The true inspiration is kindled, almost in spite of himself, by a determined subject, and the inner state of consciousness it creates is continued during the entire combined work of mental activity and material execution.

The Artist may be self-determined and find his subject in himself,—as when he sings, as the bird does, of his own inward joy. The instinct to express his delight, the harmony of the inner life and the outer existence, which he feels though he does not think, moves him to go beyond himself to catch others with sympathy. [In all which is displayed the law of the ideal universe, that joy is not to be monopolized, but is a common possession; and thus the outcome of morality itself is fore-betokened in the song of the bird, and the naïve utterance of the poet.]

On the other side, however, the greatest works of Art have been composed on the occasion of a circumstance entirely exterior. Most of the Odes of Pindar were produced to order, and so with edifices and pictures. Many and many a time has the subject been furnished for the artist, who has then endeavored to inspire himself with it as best he could. [Doubtless many a one has failed to do it, and produced only technical work, or the artist has tried again and again to find inspiration in the topic, and at last has so thrown his imagination into it that it has burst into a blaze.] According to the largeness of his nature will the artist find ready interest in the multitudinous occasions to employ his artistic

activity, which others pass by with indifference. This ample nature, added to the impulse to express himself, and the needed energy to make the expression perfect, constitute in full what is meant by artistic inspiration. And if the artist is thus to appropriate his subject and be identified with it, he ought to be able to forget his proper individuality and incidental peculiarities and absorb himself altogether in it. If the artist poses with haughtiness and lets be seen his own self-regard instead of being himself solely the organ of the living and developing idea, this is an unsound inspiration. The subjective element is too prominent. When of a high order, or perfectly pure, inspiration has *objectivity*. By this term here, we mean the character which a work of Art presents when its subject is conformed to the reality, and thus is presented to us in traits easily recognizable, yet not in its prosaic form, but as displaying its ideal element, its essential rationality.

The artist may, however, seize his subject in his inmost soul, yet so closely that it loses the possibility of development, or he lacks the power to develop it. The idea is not made completely apparent. We see that he thinks and feels, yet not clearly what he thinks and feels. This has often been the case in popular poems, when Art had not yet reached that degree of development where the animating thought could be made easily visible and transparent. The heart, as it were, driven back upon itself and oppressed by what it experiences, in order to render itself intelligible to another heart, offers a reflection



of itself in a crowd of exterior symbols which, though very expressive, can never but lightly graze our sensibility. In high Art the thought does not utter itself thus incoherently, or give but a feeble echo of what is within. Thought, however profound it may be, may still freely be developed even in the most brilliant forms and in expressions whose richness equals their harmony.

In the true objectivity, then, nothing essential to the subject must be allowed to remain in the consciousness of the artist undeveloped. The soul of the idea should be entirely manifested, the particular form which represents it should be perfectly executed, and itself be penetrated and informed everywhere by the living idea. That which is the most elevated and excellent in itself is not the mysterious *residuum*, not something inexpressible, so that one still suspects that the poet retains something, and has not put his full feeling into his work. The works of the artist are the best part of himself. That which exists in his soul as mere potency or suggestion has no reality. It is not *his* till he has expressed it, and is more completely his, the more perfect the expression. It is in the forge of his own burning imagination that the conception has been formed and moulded and made alive. Thus there is identity of the true objectivity with the absolute subjectivity of the artist. In this union is *originality*.

This characteristic shows itself in *manner* and in *style*. Mere manner, as an individual peculiarity, is not originality, yet originality has its own man-

ner. Manner is partly native, partly accidental, partly the result of culture. It does not grow out of the subject treated, but is entirely individual. It may be carried to such a point as to be in direct opposition to the true principle of the Ideal, for Art seeks to deprive its subject of everything simply accidental, and to efface in the work all personal peculiarities. If it appear, it should appear only in the external part of the work. It is principally in painting and music that it is detected, because in these arts the external element possesses the widest function. Certain peculiarities adopted by an artist, and followed by his pupils, and become habitual, constitute his manner. It may easily degenerate into a sort of routine, and a process of mechanical fabrication deprived of life, when the inspiration is no longer felt. The true manner must appear as something larger. When the artist loses himself in the subject, rather than when the subject is drawn along the narrow grooves of his idiosyncrasy, we shall still recognize something his own, but it will be only in passing, or as the result of critical scrutiny.

*Style* is something to be distinguished from manner. The French proverb is, "Style is the man himself." [It is the man himself in the entirety of his character, intellectual and moral. When closely scrutinized, it reveals the whole mode of thinking and feeling, and the *schema* of the man, which cannot be overpassed. It changes only with the development of the entire character, intellectual and moral. Style cannot be defined, other than as the man himself is



exhaustively studied and defined.] When the artist can possess completely his ideal subject, when it is run smoothly and perfectly into the mould of his mind, then his style is only another name for his originality, and is objectivity itself. To go out of the natural development of his subject in his mind, and seek for *bizarre* and startling effects, as in the straining after the humorous, is to reach an unsound originality. Even Jean Paul Richter, notwithstanding the subtlety of his thought, and the beauty of his imagery, condescends to produce his effects by this kind of treatment of matters which have no discoverable connection between them, where the combinations are only factitious. True originality does not wander hither and thither in search of fragments to be readjusted and tied together, but leaves the subject to *grow* within the mind, with all its parts so unified as to produce one sole impression.

As true freedom, in thinking and acting, allows to reign in itself the power which constitutes the universe, so that between this and the individual thought and will is no contradiction, but the harmony and identity of the two; so the true originality in Art absorbs all accidental particularity, and only when not betrayed elsewhere by caprice can the artist be filled with his subject, lose himself in it, and in producing "a thing of beauty," an immortal work, reveal his true self. Thus to have *no* manner is the sole great manner, and it is in this sense only that Homer, Sophocles, Raphael, or Shakespeare, ought to be called original geniuses.

## PART II.

### THE ART-IMPULSE IN ITS DEVELOPMENT.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### CLASSIFICATIONS OF THE ARTS.

A DISQUISITION on Art may subserve several purposes. 1. It may point out and explain the excellencies in particular works, and thus, enlarging the knowledge of its readers, help the appreciation and increase their enjoyment. This cataloguing, and recording subjective impressions, is all that is ordinarily attempted. 2. It may distinguish *kinds* of excellence, and therefore *kinds* of enjoyment, in themselves not measuring the *degree* of gratification; thereby improving the taste, and enabling a more intelligent and critical estimate of worth. Thus will emerge several standards for comparison, and the possibility of several kinds of criticism will be displayed, the Higher, and the Lower,—this last, again, susceptible of subdivisions. 3. It may endeavor to justify its distinction of higher and lower by a psychological analysis, by separating for thought the purely subjective or individualistic element in Art-appreciation from the objective or universal. 4. It may endeavor to search out the origin of the Art-

impulse itself, and the law of the mental evolution which has governed its history. This will require an investigation into the meaning of Beauty, and an inquiry into the conditions for, and an analysis of, its emotion; which is a problem belonging to the Highest Philosophy.

A complete treatise on Art might consider these questions in the order I have given them, or in the reverse order. This would be a question of *methods*, which may be inaccurately, but still intelligibly, characterized as the *a priori* and *a posteriori* methods. The former, as we have seen, is Hegel's method, which necessarily brings to the forefront the most difficult part of the whole inquiry, that after the philosophic basis. Possibly this may have had the effect of deterring some readers from going farther on till they should have reached the more intelligible and richly compensating parts of this profound and comprehensive treatise.

While all persons who occupy their attention with the productions of Art confess that they receive some gratification, yet this differs so much in degree or in kind, that at first it seems an almost hopeless task to endeavor to correct one impression by another, or to lay down any rules which will bring them to an agreement. Yet the fact that opinions and tastes *do* change encourages men to endeavor to convince one another, and to grope together after the receding phantom, the absolute and irreversible judgment. The main difficulty here lies in the almost inextricable combination of the objective and the subjective ele-

ments in all appreciation. The latter is variable, as human character is variable; and the question might be debated, and it might be argued that the subjective element should be entirely eliminated in the endeavor to appreciate or criticise any work of Art,—that this man's education, or that man's prejudices, or another's temperament, or another's natural powers, have nothing to do with the absolute worth of the thing contemplated. But such an endeavor, to eliminate the subjective element, would be, after all, chimerical, for the work of Art, whatever be its objective ground, exists only for the subjective impression; and, if it have manysidedness or complexity, must be able to appeal in various degrees to many idiosyncrasies.

To determine the liberty or the range of the subjective element in Art appreciation and criticism is a delicate and difficult problem. To find what is fixed and common in all subjectivity, and which, therefore, is identified with the objective, and to distinguish it from the variable and the particular, is, then, one task which any Philosophy of Art must set itself. While such an endeavor confines itself to philosophical language, its terms are necessarily abstract, and it becomes difficult for the ordinary mind to fix or prolong its attention. Instead, therefore, of this severe method purely, I propose to call in the aid of another, and by an examination of one or two particular works, at the proper time, to bring to view the distinctions to be made between the objective and the subjective elements in all Art-appreciation, as

severally indicating the Higher and the Lower Criticism. But we have a considerable ground to go over, by way of prelude, ere the problem can be fully and clearly displayed.

ART is, subjectively considered, the endeavor to make real, and apprehensible for human consciousness, in the combined relations of sense, understanding and imagination, and in existing material furnished by the physical world for sight or sound, or as symbol, an ideal of Beauty or Sublimity; or, in Hegel's language, the "Idea" itself in some stage of the process of its evolution.

The definition is not exhaustive. A definition rarely is. The endeavor to crowd too much into too few words does not clarify thought; and the explanation and amplification of the definition is usually a synthetic procedure.

The distinction between the Artist and the Artificer cannot, in the concrete, be sharply marked,—seeing that the artist, in dealing with his material, and as master of his technique, has to be something of an artificer, and that there are widely variant degrees of such mastery; this furnishing a standard by which some almost exclusively judge of the relative merits of works of Art. This may be called the Lower Criticism, or rather the lowest, seeing that there are still intermediate *criteria* between this and that of the Higher Criticism. The artificer, too, if more than the mere mechanic, is something of an artist, and works not without spontaneous guidance from his instinct of beauty. Wherever beauty is felt,



there is the existence of the Ideal,—often, however, in outline so faint and obscure that it could hardly be said to be presence. And this Ideal clarifies itself and displays its inner content by degrees, till the faint outline becomes the fuller picture. Thus the gradation from the artificer to the artist does not allow even a perfect abstraction for thought. Nor can we fix with entire accuracy the time and manner and conditions when the artist becomes *creative*. Here, too, the steps are gradual and insensible between, on the one hand, the successful attempt to discover, or descrial of Nature's ideal in small things, and the fixation of it in artistic material,—and, on the other, the penetration to the profounder secrets of Nature and humanity, and the exhibition of some novel and seemingly original synthesis. An absolutely new idea is not possible for the human mind. It is only discovered, and is already existent. Yet Nature reveals her perfect idea by glimpses and seeming fragments,—a little here and a little there, showing what she would be at, and provoking the mind of man by her suggestions to activity, sometimes mocking him with his inability to exhibit her thought, and sometimes stimulating him by permitting his triumph, and intoxicating him with the belief that he has transcended her accomplishment. She hides, and allows him to grope for and to find the perfect form, and supplies him with facilities to exhibit it; yet laughs him to scorn when she riots in her brilliancies of color, or bathes herself in the mystery of growing or subsiding light. Thus it may always be

disputed how far this or that artist is a creator; nor is it an inquiry worth expending much thought or many words upon.

The Arts, *par éminence*, are, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Poetry, and Music. By courtesy, and even in justice, other modes and results of imaginative activity may be called Arts,—Landscape, Histrionics, Literature, and Oratory; seeing that each of these displays close resemblances to the manner of mental movement in the undoubted Arts, and has analogy in its material with some one or more of them. This, then, too, is a question not worth disputing about. The psychological distinctions are not, in the concrete, sharply marked, but fade insensibly the one into the other. And, as before, it may be argued whether whatever is never separated, or separable in the concrete, can ever become matter for perfect abstraction for thought. The belief that it can be, and the habit growing therefrom, is, possibly, one of the subtlest and most ineradicable of the delusions of the human mind.

Each one of the indubitable Arts deals with special material. What this is, while briefly noticed now, will be considered more at length when each one comes to be examined in particular; and a rough or hasty distinction or definition will not suffice, will be very apt to mislead, and vitiate the truth of deductions from it.

These Arts admit of several kinds of classification. The most obvious one is,—those which address sense, understanding and imagination through the eye, and

those which reach them through the ear. Here, Architecture, Sculpture and Painting belong to one class, and Poetry and Music to the other. Another very obvious one depends upon the material used in the artistic endeavor to display the ideal. In Architecture and Sculpture it is solid matter, admitting of form only. Hence these are called the Plastic Arts, and they become impure arts, and trench upon the province of Painting when heed is paid to color. This is the monopoly of one Art,—the wondrous capabilities of light; and by it form is not displayed, as in Sculpture, to be verified by touch, but only suggested by this same subtle management of color.

With music the material dealt with is not sound merely, as is commonly said, but *agreeable* sound. If sound had not had sensuous sweetness, and the pleasure in it a physiological basis and explanation, there had never been an Art of Music. Sound which is not agreeable is, however, capable of imaginative treatment, but the contradiction here between the sensuous and the spiritual is so sharp, that, except when used as a foil for sweet sounds, it symbolizes rather the breaking up of the essential constitution of things, and kills the activity of imagination, which revels only in freedom and delight.

Poetry deals with two kinds of material,—first, with the represented image, or event, or utterance, or the thoughts recalled in memory; recombining these in fancy, and unifying and enlivening the synthesis by imagination; suggesting all this by the



symbolism of *words*, which thus are the bond and relation of the common understanding of author and auditor. But Poetry deals likewise with sound, and is ruled also by the unique charm which sound may have for the ear, quite distinct from the charm of agreeable sound in music, having the characteristics of rhythm, assonance, harmony, proportion, and a certain sweetness, giving a vibration probably quite distinct from the musical vibration; so that one may have the poetic ear in perfection, yet be almost destitute of the musical ear (as was the case with Samuel Taylor Coleridge); or may have a morbidly sensitive musical ear, yet be almost utterly inappreciative of the sweetness of verse (as is the case with many musicians and lovers of music). Indeed, the poetic ear is a much rarer gift than the other. Thus Poetry, like Painting, can give a sensuous as well as an intellectual pleasure, more charming than whatever sensuous pleasure may be still derivable from Sculpture and Architecture, and often more exquisite than any intellectual delight, because more mysterious still, more direct, with fewer links between to be traced out by the understanding, hence purer and simpler.

The Arts have also been classified chronologically, but merely by the distinction between ancient and modern Art, with no endeavor to establish any radical distinction; lumping together things as diverse as Greek Statuary, Egyptian Architecture, and Hebrew Poetry.

Hegel seems to have been the first to accomplish

a true objective classification, and to mark by appropriate epithets the *stadia* through which Art has moved in the evolution of the human mind. These he characterizes as the Symbolic, Classic, and Romantic periods. That there has been such an evolution is evident, but that it has been identically the same among all peoples cannot be made out. Hence the history of Art in each country having Art at all is susceptible of distinct treatment. Nor has the development of the artistic mind proceeded everywhere with equal speed, and hence cannot be adjusted to any exact chronology. But independent of all conditions of time and place and peculiar circumstance, it has had a history, and, allowing for variety of fluctuation, an inevitable and unchangeable one. How far this may be thought out, and regarded as the result of a primal force belonging to the human soul itself, and a natural uncoiling of the imprisoned spring, Spirit enmeshed in Nature; or whether it may not be found necessary to postulate an impetus from without, is an interesting, constantly recurring and radical problem which must be disposed of in an exhaustive Philosophy of History.

The idea of this evolution, and its necessary moments, were seized by Hegel; and it is not too much to say that, with this distinction made clear, Art appreciation and criticism have become a new thing, and Art has been brought back in thought to its necessary connection with Philosophy and Religion. Thus, then, by a process mainly *a priori*, but avail-



ing itself of hints, and verifying itself *a posteriori*, the history of the human mind, so far as it was necessary to understand the Arts, has been unraveled.

These words, Symbolic, Classic, Romantic, will be found very convenient to characterize stages of the evolution separable in thought. In the concrete they have never been perfectly separated, but run into each other, as we shall see. Truth and History give us nowhere distinctions utterly sharp, no chasms. Anything seemingly new on the one side of any alleged gulf will be found to have its roots far back in the other. Even spirit and matter do not give us an unbridgeable chasm, seeing that each is what it is for us by virtue of its relation to the human mind, and cannot be thought except in terms and under conditions supplied by the structure of that mind; nor can the mind itself be thought and understood but by virtue of its relation to either realm. If it ever seems to be thinking pure spirit it must be of spirit barren of content, and therefore equivalent to naught; or it must be of spirit wealthy in ideas,—and all these ideas, for their existence and completeness, are under obligation to the actual material universe, which therefore has supplied the organs of spirit, whereby intercourse and connection have been rendered possible, and the absolute intent of the whole has been displayed,—the *commonwealth*,—with its infinitely varied ethical, intellectual and physical relations. In all the philosophies and sciences truth has been obscured instead of being clarified by car-

rying abstraction into the concrete, by regarding that which was seemingly separable in thought as possibly separable in fact; and also by forgetting that everything is in movement, and only to be explained as a process, a perpetual *becoming*, never fixed, always fluent,—even when seeming cyclical, displaying an order, a progress, an idea, even in the cyclical movement. Every generation of oaks, or of eagles, has been a slight change and modification of the generation which went before.

These words, Symbolic, Classic, and Romantic, are very useful, but must not be taken as a consecutive movement that is absolutely necessary; for sometimes and somewhere there seems to be a reversal of this order,—an instance of which is furnished by the Hebrew people, whose Art never dwelt in the classic *stadium*.

The endeavor to characterize the several Arts as in themselves belonging to one mood of mind, one stage of the evolution more than another, is of doubtful value, but worthy of consideration. In characterizing, for instance, Architecture as a purely Symbolic Art, as Hegel does, it will be found that the word "Symbolic" has to be used in a sense somewhat different from that it bears as belonging to *all* early Art, Sculpture as well. And the fundamental ideas which account for Greek Sculpture are traceable in Oriental Poetry, and in Christian Painting. And Poetry, in its marvelous flexibility and power of adaptation, has coursed through all the artistic history of every people, whether in the Symbolic,

Classic, or later periods. If the products of the first stirrings of the artistic impulse be called "Symbolic," this characteristic must be capable of detection and verification in its Poetry, as well as in its Architecture and its Sculpture, seeing that the origin of these endeavors to carry out the "play-impulse" could not have been far apart in time.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE SYMBOLIC PERIOD.

THAT which distinguishes the Symbolic period may be reached by reflecting upon what seems likely to have been the history of the human mind, if regarded as discovering itself to be enveloped in Nature, and a part of Nature; what must have been the naïve procedure by which its conceptions were born, progressed, and at length became distinct.

This is so far, of course, a speculative endeavor, yet one which may have its historic verification. But the whole procedure suggests, if not requires, another and profounder inquiry, itself both speculative and historic, into which Hegel does not enter, and which, therefore, lies apart from the purpose of this treatise, but which may be indicated, viz: whether language, itself Symbolic, and by which man thinks, can be explained as having a purely natural origin; or whether history and psychological analysis conduct us back to the presupposition of impact from without, therefore, a supernatural origin; in which latter case, it would follow that the Art-impulse itself must have been involved in or made possible by the primal impetus, and thus that it underwent degradation and concealment in large portions of the human race, as it may be undergoing

still; while for others it has been rescued and set forward in the way of advance by special protection, and the supply of unique conditions for education and development. But, abandoning this inquiry, let us see what would be the natural evolution of human intelligence, after a certain stage in the life of reflection had been reached.

The human being, then, finds himself a body in a world of sight and sound and touch; a feeble and minute fragment in the midst of forces overwhelming, and gigantic masses, and unbounded space. He does not know himself yet as a free spirit having any ideal independence of nature. He knows the world about him only as a vast and bewildering riddle whose secret he cannot penetrate. The instinct to unify, derived from his own unity as a self, prompts him to seek the center and bond of all phenomena, to find a cohering thread to make them intelligible; in short, a First Principle. He experiments in thought, and locates it, now here and now there. The law by which one tentative solution is reached at one time and place, and another at another place or time, is too subtle to be discoverable, and much disparity is likely to exist, though some obvious suggested solutions are likely to be most frequent. It is the sky, or the sun, or fire, or water, or something else. In a little while the solution is discarded for another, or a rival springs beside it. Yet nothing is quite adequate. The mind in its fertility makes a new synthesis, and imparts to the natural object or aggregate of objects something from itself, and thus



*creates*, and a new idea seems to be awaiting seizure, which has no exact outward representation or image. The idea itself is vague and fluctuating, and can only fix itself and clarify itself by finding some outward expression. That which exists as a waning and brightening, dissipating and combining object for thought, must float into the sky of imagination in order to acquire shape. The vague idea must seek to express itself by Symbol, and as the Symbol itself cannot transcend the idea, it must, after a time, exhibit its own inadequacy, and start the mind on a new enterprise after a new solution.

Thus we have one side of the explanation of the appearance of Art, and the reason why it is mainly at first Symbolic, at least when it attempts to go beyond the mere imitation of natural objects. There is another side to the explanation, quite as or more essential, to which I shall presently advert. Under the conditions, however, which I have been describing, we should look to see figures, or structures, or combinations of words marking the *Stadium* the mind had reached in its attempt after a solution; and the early Art of every people is therefore an indication of its idiosyncrasy in the life of reflection, which itself may have been determined by external influences, social, geographical, climatic or otherwise.

But the love of the *Beautiful*, or the capacity to find it and appreciate it, is innate in human nature. It originates in the soul's instinct of its origin and its end. It is inchoate knowledge of *self*,—of self as member in a vast organism, and as including a

whole system of relations. Hence the Soul, in its history, begins at once to be at home in, to enjoy, the Beautiful, whether in motion, or sight, or sound. This is a glimpse or suggestion of its true and intended life, that which calls forth its profoundest sympathy. What Schiller calls "the play-impulse" stirs the soul, and it soon exhibits its preference of one object or movement over another for some other reason than its physical utility. The rudest ornamentation in the savage is something different in kind from the propensity of the bird to deck its habitat. It is just the difference between the beautiful and the agreeable. The latter has a physical and physiological explanation, the former a spiritual one as well.

These two propensities combining,—that to symbolize his half-formed and unclear conception, and that to make what he does create correspond to the requirements of his instinct of the Beautiful,—combining in different ways, and in various proportions in individuals and peoples,—will produce the first objects of Art, which are thus most likely to be symbolic, and to continue to be so, till the idea and the object find identity, or seeming identity; or until the obscure conception becomes clear, and can have its adequate mode of expression.

The idols of the Hindus, their early Vedic hymns, the architecture and the statues of the Egyptians, show thus the human mind laboring after the solution of the enigmas of life. This characteristic so far predominates in the stupendous productions of Egypt-

tian Art as to overwhelm or crowd out the Beautiful; yet they are not entirely devoid of it. Repose, symmetry, sometimes grace, and the loveliness of color are apparent. And in the poetry of the Orientals the play-impulse, the evident enjoyment of Beauty in nature and man and human life, is still more apparent, though still in conjunction with the symbolism. The episodes in the Mahabarata are very beautiful, and in a kind appealing to the most modern sympathies. For the sublime in very ancient Art we must look rather to the Hebrew poetry, which cannot be at all explained, as all other ancient Art may be with comparative success; which, indeed, for its explanation seems to require the presupposition of some of the solutions of the Romantic period itself, and should be made a matter of entirely distinct inquiry.

What characterizes the Symbolic period is, that the spiritual is weighed down by the corporeal and the material, struggles to be free, cannot think itself aloof from the physical, is enmeshed in it, and partakes of its bewildering incomprehensibility. When it loosens itself, or thinks it has loosened itself, we have the dawn of another period, reaching its full significance as the Classic period. While spirit is lost in matter, it follows the lead of the material, fashions the human frame itself (itself the symbol of the spiritual soul) after the prevailing expression given by external nature, while in Classic Art the mode is precisely the reverse. The Egyptian architect or sculptor gives to his structures or his fig-

ures the weight, the fixedness and repose of the mountain; while the Greek Temple has an airy grace, and seems to rest lightly upon the earth, yet shows no propensity to desert the earth; looks almost as though it might float over the earth as the nautilus sails over the ocean; and the Greek God seems scarcely to touch it, or so lightly, while yet free of it, as to show that in imagination the soul has burst its bonds, and knows of an Olympic realm finer and more fluent than the grosser element upon which men have been used to tread.

It is evident that the symbolic tendency can never be entirely transcended as long as there are enigmas to be solved; and hence there is symbolism abundant in modern poetry and music, though the demon of Realism seems to have tried to capture the other three arts. But when a solution of the enigma is reached which gives satisfaction for any period, then it is evident the artistic impulse will stir more freely and powerfully; and thus liberated from trammels and impediments, while undisturbed, will produce abundantly from the well of measureless content within itself. Thus we have before us the Classic Period, its swift progress to its culmination, its wonderful and abounding richness, its rapid decline, and the arrival of the long interval when it can only imitate itself, when whatever is true in it will not die, and whatever is false will still find copyists.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE CLASSIC PERIOD.

WHILE these words, Symbolic, Classic and Romantic, distinguish a certain order in the attainment of clear conceptions, both logical and chronological, the proportion which these periods bear to each other will vary with peoples, as with individuals, seeing that nations are born and become autonomic at variant stages of this development, and that the tendencies of one period, inherited, will prolong themselves in the one which follows, nor ever be entirely extinguished. Hence, even in Classic Art, the characteristics of which sever it very cleanly from what went before and came after, there is not an entire abandonment of the symbolic endeavor; and there is to be found even a mute prophecy of the Romantic stage and the presence of questions which in the pure Classic are, or should be, hushed.

Nor, everywhere, did the several Arts come to being in any order indicated by this mental evolution. Accident, that is, no clearly discoverable law, must have determined whether the first form of Art among any people was Architecture, Sculpture, or Poetry. Probably it was not Painting, and beyond question it was not Music. Nevertheless, it may be admitted that the symbolic mode of thought is pre-



dominant in Architecture, the Classic in Sculpture, and the Romantic in Painting, and any or all in Poetry and Music, according to the idiosyncrasy of the Artist; though I regard these distinctions as of little worth, as sometimes misleading rather, since they may take the form of premature solutions, and furnish temptations to rest and avoid further analysis.

But the first phases of the career of the human mind, in its journey after satisfactory conceptions, may be conveniently characterized as the Symbolic period. These problems recurred, and are traceable in the early history of all peoples. What is the Highest? is the perpetual question. It is Light,—or the Light-Bearer,—or the Ambient Expanse. It is physical Power, rending as the lightning, or shattering as the earthquake; or some Quality,—solidity, firmness, unchangeableness, or other abstraction reached by thought. Or it is the mystical principle of Life. This, that, or the other solution is ventured upon, hinted at, or symbolized, according to the variant preference of the Art-impulse to express itself in words or things. It is the evidence of a wondrous instinct in the soul of man, and shows what far-reaching capabilities were wrapped up in his mind, awakening out of chaos, that he should thus, with toil, have purified his own conceptions, and marched on steadily to results so astonishing, and be moving on still in a limitless endeavor. Whether in this impulse he did not receive an external and quickening impulse at the start, and has not

had since another quickening impulse, is, as I have said, a fair question for historic and philosophic inquiry, but one I do not intend to deal with now.

In the history of one people there was a great leap forward out of the darkness of the Symbolic period into clearer light. He who was groping after something upon which his mind could rest with more satisfaction reaches the discovery that what he is seeking for lies at his feet; or rather, within himself,—that he himself is the Highest, or akin to the Highest, and, therefore, that the Highest must be judged after him as its congener; that the free spirit, lord of itself even as determined, is a conception which the mind in its utmost aspiration cannot transcend, and which tempts him with enticing fascination to fix it for his contemplation. In imagination, if no otherwise, he can withdraw himself measurably from this oppressive weight of nature, and control her forces in some realm, limited, indeed, but sufficient, and to an extent that will admit the consciousness of secure independence and perfect, powerful serenity. Thus Greek Art gives us the Greek *god*. But knowing himself as an individual related to other individuals, and indebted to them for his development, he does not reach the conception of spirit absolutely free, but as limited by other spirits; and, since his divinities would be poor and barren things but for the numerous and various relations existing between themselves and the realms beneath them, the whole is figured as an Olympus, with select inhabitants, and

a Pantheon, gradually growing cumbrous with its own weight. In the higher circle each god seems independent, though limited in function, and does not trench upon the function of any other; or if he does at length, it is to imperil the safety of the whole. Thus one Dynasty after another occupied the Olympus, till at length the whole broke to pieces and disappeared like a moving cloud. But while it lasted it so satisfied the instinct for beauty, that the Greek is beguiled into resting in it for a time, and puts aside the troublesome search after a First Principle, or figures it as a Fate, obscurely lying beneath. But the human mind never rests, the inquiry stirs again, the Philosophic period gets beyond its dawn, and the ideal of Classic Art must of necessity begin to be suspected as no longer an adequate and satisfying solution of the riddle of existence. That its period was of necessity short-lived may be otherwise seen by reflecting that to represent these divinities as taking sides and conflicting with each other on account of their interest in the affairs of men, is a contradiction to be reconciled, and therefore an impairment of their beauty and sufficiency for the æsthetic sense, that is sure to be discovered at length, and is a token of the approaching decadence. But while the Classic period was at its high noon the results were wonderful. It reached its highest accomplishment in the Art of Sculpture, to which Architecture was subservient. To fix this idea of the Highest for apprehension, the Artist, knowing the human spirit only as the human



face and form, studies them, seizes the secret of their beauty and their grace, and is enabled to give, in expression of countenance, in the repose or suggested motion of body, this ideal aloofness and spiritual serenity and untroubled sense of power. The success is so marked that it seems perfect. Given the thought, and we cannot criticise the finest realizations of it in the Greek statues. The idea and the form are not merely married, they are identical. Neither has any existence apart from the other. The material shape is sure to display it as the result of a purely mechanical process, ruled by the shaping skill after the pattern of the ideal form. The Artist might or might not be his own Artificer; yet, to be a fine artificer was itself a rare gift.

It is probably true that the Greeks received their divinities by tradition from the Orient; but what has been there vague and obscurely symbolic, becomes in their mind clear and fixed, crystallizes into perfect shape as an ideal. You can see the distinct thought, the symmetrical and well-rounded conception in the Greek statues, while in the Egyptian it is imperfect, suggestive, mystic, bewildering. This illumination of the ideal in the Greek mind was owing to the precise apprehension of itself as spirit, now lifted up for its own admiration as a seemingly perfect thing. The mists which have beclouded the human self-consciousness have subsided and left it in the sunshine, and the Artist now hastens to fix it for contemplation, not waiting to give prolonged scrutiny to discover whether this ideal have not

destructive force within itself, which will by-and-by cause it to dissipate, or only be recalled in memory as an exquisite dream, as a lovely and seducing phantom, born out of, but not the true image, after all, of the human spirit.

What is observable here is, that the Greeks idealized the human spirit, and its possibilities as suggested to them, converting it into a god, and its classified modes into a pantheon of gods, rather than a hierarchy, for a hierarchy would have implied too great a limitation of freedom. The *Dii Majores* are each independent in his sphere. No one is a servant. Even the lesser divinities have a realm of their own, in which they are unmolested, not by virtue of any command from Jupiter, but according to the rule of Fate, the immutable and absolute constitution of the universe. In the seeming exceptions to this, as in the case of Mercury, or Hebe, or elsewhere, their function is represented as spontaneity, and not as servitude; or, if otherwise, so far as these were contradictions in the system, they were really disintegrating forces, which, with others, brought about its destruction.

Another thing to be noticed is, that all the doings of gods, as well as of men, are accomplished under the conditions of the actual physical universe. This still preserves itself unchanged. The gods do not unmake the light or the thunder, do not spiritualize or transcend in conception the *world*. The physical forces are surmounted to some extent, but exist still in their own independence apart from any



connection they may have with spirit. At the bottom, underneath all these divinities, far down in the ultimate obscure, lies Fate, and sleeps or stirs, and all, gods and men, are subject to her, and must change or disappear when she stirs hostilely. We can comprehend the Greek ideal, then, rightly only by remembering that the physical universe is not mastered or transcended in their thought, that it abides still in its secure foundations; and that all possible changes are conditioned by its permanence in its present form. This free spirit, then, is not really free.

Besides, these gods, after all, in their seeming independence, are limited by the existence of men. They cannot get rid of them, but are troubled by them. They have to annul their doings. They cannot get rid of nature. They are troubled by it, and have to annul its disorders and perturbations. Hence, while all order is represented as presided over by the gods, disorder exists still, rooted in the physical forces, and the gods cannot annihilate it. Disorder exists among men, nay, even among the divinities themselves, anthropomorphized as they are, and Jupiter has to interfere to settle their quarrels. This slight and scanty allegiance to a principle of justice is the only trace of any ethic in the Greek mythology. In their freedom the gods condescend to human vices. Disorder is the only fault, for that is destructive. We have human nature figured as perfect with the moral characteristic left out,—modes of the imaginative soul of man represented

in marble. The idea was, the human face and form as modified by this interior impulse. It is the beauty of self-will and caprice, and, after all, individualistic. The moment they should be figured as in conflict with each other beauty would disappear, and the conflict could not have any sublimity, for it would have no moral meaning. Hence the Greek sculptors never represented any conflict between their gods, though they are thought to sweep the human ones aside when they become too troublesome or offend their self-regard.

This freedom of the gods, existing under these limitations of nature and humanity, is thus only seeming freedom after all. The Greek mind must, sooner or later, detect the inconsistency, and discover this ideal of the divine to be unsatisfying, to be one which man himself can transcend; and these divinities must begin to melt away, and at length disappear, when thought shall have filtered from the philosophic mind down into the lower strata, or linger only as beautiful memories, so beautiful as to be fondly recalled and reproduced till the end of time, but never, surely, again, with the intense absorbing delight of those who fancied they had reached the ultimate of human endeavor or imaginative longing. It may be doubted whether ever again such enthusiasm for Art will exist as did in the days of Phidias and Praxiteles, or (as a case somewhat parallel) as did in the palmy days of Christian art, the days of Raphael and Correggio. Such a dream, such a period of forgetfulness as was

the Classic period, must have its awakening. Such an eddy, curving and circling with such exquisite grace, away from the stern, sweeping current of human thought and progress, must, sooner or later, be caught and obliterated by the impetuous force. The soul, with its infinite potentialities, must plunge into the torrents, till it catch a glimpse of the calm and limitless and shining sea beyond; and, measuring the strength and the skill needed to evade or conquer the breakers and the whirlpools, reconcile itself to that conflict and endeavor.

The ideal of Classic Art is not the ultimate and true ideal for humanity. It is not perfect, after all, except as we consent to an abstraction. Its one thought, which marks a brief resting-place in the history of the human intellect, is indeed perfectly represented, and we cannot admire these works too much as astonishing achievements, or enjoy with any misgivings their exquisite charm. They will repay all the study given to them, and furnish help to see that there are higher beauties and greater achievements still possible for man's creative spirit. They illustrate, too, that the progress of human Art has not been uniformly forward; that it has had its retrogressions, its intervals of failure and seeming waste, but really of secret preparation for new advance.

It is to be noticed that in all stages of the development of Art there is the instinct of merely physical beauty; notably in Greek Art, and at certain periods in the career of Romantic Art, and even during the

reign of Symbolic Art. The Song of Songs, and the episodes in the Mahabharata, sprang out of this kindling of the poetic mind. For, were it not for this instinct, the Art-impulse would not exist. Therefore, to express delight in beauty, perhaps poetry was the readiest mode of expression. The earliest sculpture or painting may have been mere imitation of the natural object, and have had a teleological aim, while the rhythm in sound or symmetry in architecture show already a detection of some one element of the Beautiful. This instinct soon led to the discovery of what was the most beautiful thing that the creative principle had made, the human face and form. And this, idealized as we have seen, became the god, and connected itself thus with religious rites and the temples for worship. This, probably, was the reason why Sculpture rather than Painting was adopted, and possibly, also, because mastery of its technique, the needed mechanical ingenuity, was more readily attained. The material conditions for such high excellence in the sister art were not yet fully supplied.

So far, then, as beauty in humanity is dependent upon form, upon lines and curves, the Greeks seem to have carried their Art as near perfection as possible, and have not been equalled in this respect by the Romantic Artists. In giving expression to the face and figure, according to the requirements of their ideal, they were equally successful. They had not yet reached the thoughts which made possible expres-

sion of a higher beauty; yet even this, in a negative way, they divined.

It is a remarkable illustration of the depth in human nature of the instinct of the Beautiful, that with naïve unconsciousness the Greek sculptor should rarely or never have done violence to the instinct of moral Beauty. He did not intend to make his gods or men moral in our sense, but he avoided all contradiction to the requirements of the moral. His nude statues are pure. A lascivious expression never marks any one of his divinities. Even the Bacchicals are devoid of impurity or moral ugliness. As it is true that physical beauty itself has at the root the same explanation as moral beauty, the two being different elements of one synthesis, diverse aspects and relations of the same idealized concrete, any contradiction here would have violated the requirements of physical beauty itself.\*

\* "Wherever there is contest, as between artistic and moral beauty, unless the moral side prevail, all is lost. Let any sculptor hew us out the most ravishing combination of tender curves and spheric softness that ever stood for woman, yet if the lip have a certain fullness that hints of the flesh, if the brow be insincere, if, in the minutest particular, the physical beauty suggest a moral ugliness, that sculptor, unless he be portraying moral ugliness for a moral purpose, may as well give over his marble for paving-stones. Time, whose judgments are inexorably moral, will not accept his work. For, indeed, we may say that he who has not yet perceived how artistic beauty and moral beauty are convergent lines, which run back into a common ideal origin, and who, therefore, is not afire with moral beauty just as with artistic beauty; that he, in short, who has not come to that stage of quiet and eternal frenzy in which the beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty mean one thing, burn as one fire, shine as one light, within him, is not yet the great Artist."—*From the last lecture of the late Sidney Lanier, delivered before the Johns Hopkins University in April, 1881.*



It was reserved for the Romans, the imitators, to sensualize the Art of Painting, and for Artists of the Romantic period,—for Christian Artists,—to produce a sensual Venus, to give us an Io, or Danae, or Leda, or Semele; and even in statuary the purity of the Greek nude figure has rarely been perfectly attained.

When the æsthetic sense is deep enough, it is an unconscious moral sense, and keeps men pure, and the moral sense in its perfection becomes the æsthetic. The two disagree only in their imperfection, as matter for abstraction; and can be thought apart only in consequence of their imperfection.

But in all Greek Art there is little or no evidence of any detection of the positive side of the ultimate Beauty. Moral ugliness was shunned, but the finer spiritual traits could not be given, for the thoughts which they expressed did not yet exist for the Greeks. Indeed, the whole range of thought was far narrower than was possible in the Romantic period. These lofty divinities, these high gods, after all, are narrower creations than man himself. They cannot enter into some of the moods of the human spirit. They are always serious, if not covertly mournful. They never smile, for to smile would be to confess to incongruity and contradiction, and the humorous and ridiculous belong to the same category of existence with the pathetic and the sublime. These divinities never appeal to the profoundest human sympathies. They never suffer, they never die. Hence they are never loved, but only admired, envied and

feared. Only a select mortal now and then is lifted up by them. Their immortal serenity in the midst of human agonies and unrest, of this everlasting struggle of man, and nature, too, is itself the intensest of contradictions. What gods are these that have no pity? For a little while during their triumphant period the Greeks forgot that these gods must die if they would keep hold of the human heart, and be able to rise again carrying the human race with them to the passionless heaven.

The modern Artist who attempts to revive the feeling which characterized Classic Art is galvanizing a corpse, and the toilsome attempts to reach in kind the excellence of these works results in conspicuous failure. Our modern sculptors mistake their mission in carving anew the Greek divinities. Michael Angelo, with the wisdom of true greatness, never attempted to rival the antique. What is any modern Venus beside the Medicean, or the goddess figure found at Melos?

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ROMANTIC PERIOD.

THE fault in Classic Art, whence came its ruin, is, as we have seen, that it stopped short at an impossible ideal, with a momentary and seducing phase in the evolution of the human spirit, beguiling the Greek Artist to linger in a delicious reverie, that must, when it has rounded itself into rainbow beauty, vanish, like the evanescent and hollow orb that reflects the colors of the sky. He was asleep and wrapped in the lovely visions of the Enchanted Ground, as though there were no cavernous depths and fearful declivities, no river of death beyond.

In Hegel's language, in Classic Art spirit seizes itself, but it is in an incomplete form. It is not as disengaged yet from the outer world, but as identical with it. It can rule to some extent, but avoids conflict with its forces, submits to them still and thinks it has found harmony and content in the coalescence. Not till it can disengage itself utterly from the world can it feel its own completeness and sufficiency, and, being its own master, spring forth in a new attempt to become the master of the world. To find at length that it is self-determining, that it is a synthesis the law of whose being is in itself, that the concrete spirit differs no whit in essential characteristics and in its

immanent relations from the Absolute Spirit, being its reflection still, and that though shattered and distorted there is nothing lost, but that the whole can be restored to harmonious adjustment, and become the perfect image; to know one's self, thus, as in idea like God, and kindred to him in the very finest and highest capacities of the Divine; and not merely to imagine as gods men magnified after the longings of one's own unreal and broken self; this ideal self-knowledge is what is meant by spirit's becoming possessed of itself. To know one's self this in idea is one thing; to know one's self this in reality is another. This idea has the evidence of its truth, has its justification in the requirements of the ultimate beauty, which alone is satisfying, and can lay the reason to rest. But between the actuality and the realized idea there is a dark and fearful passage-way, and no otherwise than by threading it can the chasm between the imagination of it and the reality of it be left behind. And the passage does not lie along the lofty bridge of pure thought. That, indeed, spans it, but it will not sustain the wayfarer. Rather it lies along the lowly pathway of practice, where alone the foothold is firm. It was the discovery of this interval which awoke the human mind at length out of its dream to what must characterize the true ideal, which only can have realization.

The clearer apprehension of the deranged ethical relation, becoming at length a full conviction of the contradiction of sin, and that perfection has its center and its key in *love*, and not in power or knowl-

edge merely,—this opened a new vista before the human mind, of which Socrates and Plato and Aristotle had caught a glimpse, and into which, at length, as Christians think, flashed light from above, so that the permanent illumination disclosed both the difficult pathway and, in the distance, a new and higher and eternal beauty.

In other language, it was the concrete exhibition of ideal human holiness in Jesus Christ which gave men the deeper sense of sin, taught them their imperfections and the conditions for the ultimate well-being; which clarified and corrected their conception of the Highest, which caused a new ideal of their own possible attainment to shine gloriously out of the mists, and gave them an undoubting assurance that the ultimate of human thought had been reached, and the riddle of existence solved.

When captivated by this thought, very naturally man becomes comparatively indifferent to the unsatisfying world, as a something which he has transcended in thought, and which is to be transcended in fact. The tyranny of nature, the forces and the magnitudes which have so oppressed him, he can afford now to spurn. He looks forward to the time when he shall command these forces, or dispense with them. The world is no more his master. It retires away from him. It becomes a something he can deal with without fear. It becomes plastic in his hands. He is independent of it, and may fashion it at his caprice after the forms of his own spirit. He bathes everything in it in the depths of his own infinite



subjectivity, or he uses it to picture or suggest images of the ultimate perfection. He deals with nature as a spirit free from it, yet not only not disdaining to use it, but, as finding in it material to enrich his own being, recognizing for himself a new necessity to use it, the necessity of perfect freedom, the vindication of his infinite caprice. All this is, or makes possible, Romantic Art.

Thus the law which Art follows is furnished by the prevalent conception of the universe, and as this must have its center or unifying Principle, it is based upon a Philosophy, and when Philosophy finds, as it must, intelligence and will in its First Principle, it becomes a Religion, and thus Art has always expressed the religious belief of the time. These periods, then, severally called Symbolic, Classic and Romantic, are distinguished; first, as the rude endeavor to find an adequate conception; second, as the seeming attainment of it; and, third, as the rectification of the idea and the discovery of the process to be passed through before realization.

The very interesting question would now arise, What is the future of Art? Is there a new *stadium* probable, or even possible? Or can men only go on reproducing and recombining in various incongruous mixtures the old material? From what has been said already, it is evident that the answer to this inquiry must depend upon our ability to forecast the philosophic history of the human race, or rather the form of its religious belief; for Philosophy becomes Religion whenever it comes to be

warmed by emotion, and ethical and practical issues display themselves, necessitating choice between indulgence and sacrifice. This inquiry is one which has never yet been very deeply groped into.

One aim, then, for Romantic Art will be to present, in forms for the imagination, features of the ultimate ideal of the harmonized universe; in which case it can hardly miss being symbolic again, and — finding its own tentatives inadequate — thus resembling the mental movement belonging to the early periods of Symbolic Art. But otherwise, and chiefly, it will occupy itself with the infinitely varied characteristics of the interval. In dealing thus with such wanton freedom with the material furnished by the world, many novel attitudes of the human spirit will arise, many curious psychological phenomena will appear, not possible in the older time. The ideas of honor, fidelity, chivalry, love, humor, are all something new. It would be interesting to reproduce the subtle analysis and the detection of the peculiarity of each of these, which Hegel gives, but for this we have not space, for it is a disquisition of length, and that could not well be abridged. But we see thus how large has become the field for the Protean spirit of man; how numerous the capabilities of the new Art in comparison with all that went before! A new Architecture is invented; Sculpture takes a new phase so far as it is Romantic; Painting enlarges its scope with bewildering fertility. Music is created, and is bringing us new surprises still; and Poetry rises and sinks, ranges, becomes greater and smaller,

sublime or petty, and follows with its charm-giving, as the most flexible of the Arts should, all the sinuosities of the universe which the fluent spirit permeates.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE TEMPORAL AND THE ETERNAL IDEALS.

REMARKS pretending to give the relative worth of works of Art are generally only subjective, and are liable to be abandoned, or changed, or even contradicted by the same subject as new light comes, or the point of view is shifted. But men love to utter these opinions, for they are expressive of their own delight, and they hope thereby to win sharers of it, and to induce others to look more narrowly at the objects of their partiality. Hence, it may be that the critique upon which I shall now enter may not be devoid of bias from subjective impressions; but I propose now to return to the purpose which I indicated before,—to bring up for close and thoughtful examination one or two particular works of Art,—in order to show what I have meant in speaking of the Higher and the Lower Criticism, and what is the limit of subjectivity in Art-appreciation, and hence what has true objectivity. Incidentally it will also appear that in Romantic Art the Classic mode of dealing with its material has not been entirely abandoned; but is traceable in much of it, though still modified by the new conceptions.

Let us, then, bring before us, in memory and

imagination, two well known pictures, which used to hang side by side in the old gallery at Dresden,—Raphael's *Madonna di San Sisto* and Correggio's *Madonna of the St. Sebastian*, either of which gives delight of some kind, and in some degree, to those regarding it.

The face of either virgin is beautiful,—of Correggio's sweet, human, maternal, and shows the soul dwelling with tender complacency upon the thought of the beautiful child she holds, and that he is an object of interest or worship to the beholders;—of Raphael's, also human and maternal, but the human rapt into the Divine; and thereby her maternity is lifted into a higher region, and fused by a loftier and intenser emotion still. Thus a different ideal of womanhood and its relations was, for the nonce, in the mind of either artist. There are many *Madonnas* in which the religious element is wanting, which never carry the thoughts away from the earth into the heights or the depths; but in each of these pictures there is aim after expression of religious emotion, which must be dependent upon religious thought, and I think that, in each of these, the perception of the Artist is given at the very highest of his religious attainment; for the *Madonnas* in Correggio's *Notte*, and the *St. Jerome*, and the *Madonna Scodella*, the three most beautiful ones beside, are, in my impression, still more distinctively human than the one in the *St. Sebastian*; and I suppose there is no question that in the faces in the *Sistine Madonna* Raphael reached his highest religious attainment in



his art. But these opinions will not affect the truth of what I have to say.

Confining the attention to the faces of the virgins alone, some gazers will prefer that in one picture, some that in the other. Why should they do so? It cannot be that the *degree* of their pleasure will depend upon the *kind* of their pleasure. One may say that this sweet, maternal face in the St. Sebastian is the one with which he is most at home, which is linked with more numerous and delightful associations. It reminds him of his own wife, or his own mother, of his own child, of the loving looks which have often given birth to his own raptures. The dearest thing he knows on the earth is human love, and he accepts the suggestiveness of this countenance as leading to the most attractive images and the most exquisite feelings. With the expression of the other face he is not so familiar. He sees that it is religious, acknowledges that it is lofty, appreciates the beauty of contour, and whatever loveliness of color his memory or fancy can supply. But the expression beckons him away, and he cannot follow, or he fears to follow. It deals with thoughts with which he is not familiar, whose associations are bewildering, whose suggestions are too profound, and to dwell upon which for too long time would make him uneasy. And so he turns to the tender human face in the other picture as the one contenting him most. It gives him a more prolonged satisfaction, and his delight in it is more peaceful and untroubled than in the other. And yet, when momentarily wrapped

in uneasy admiration of the other, he may have suspected that its associations were higher in kind; and that his gratification, too, was a more powerful straining of the imaginative spirit; and, because more powerful, then requiring more effort of the will to sustain the tension; and thus is explained why he must soon relapse away and into a lower range of thought and imaginative activity. What, then, is the secret of the attractiveness, what is the characteristic of the beauty in the one case and in the other?

We presuppose that in either face are all the conditions of physical beauty,—the faultless contour, the rounded cheek, the aspiring arch of the brow, the tender droop of lash and lid, the glorious waving hair. Criticism will hardly care to deal with these, or institute any comparisons. There is a greater difference in the mysterious flesh; chiefly, however, because while one picture is comparatively opaque, the other is luminous, and has its own seducing charm of light, beguiling the observer to linger the longer with it, though he may believe it to be of a lower excellence. But all gazers soon look beyond the beauty of form and of color, and of the subtle gradation of light, and find, with more or less penetrating vision, the beauty of Soul. On what, then, does this beauty depend? and why and how is that in one different from that in the other? Which is the Highest? How are to be distinguished the ideas from which the beauty of each has its distinctive charm?

In the one, Correggio's, we have human love, tenderness beyond the power of words to express, for the lovely and mysterious child, gratitude implied rather than expressed for the gift of that child, sympathy, too, for the human ones before whom she holds up the infant, and desire for their recognition. It is maternal love in acknowledged subordination to the Divine love, yet retaining its full consciousness as human, and overflowing the bounds of the maternal relation to take in and claim fellowship with the representatives of the whole body of the redeemed.

In the other case we have human love still, but forgetting itself in a more elevated consciousness,—the consciousness of the Supreme Object of worship. She is thinking of the God-like rather than of the human in her child. He is mysteriously above her, even when the object of her care. It is not the relation which human ones bear to each other, but that which all bear to the Source of life which has now condescended and come near in the person of this child. We do not stop to criticise the painter's ideal in the face of the child. Of this much might be said. But in the mother the consciousness of maternity is in abeyance, swallowed up in other thoughts. The human love yields to the adoring love; and, in the painter's thought, the adoring love itself has assimilated itself to the object of its adoration, and the Virgin claims adoration for herself as the bearer of this veiled Omnipotence, where yet the Omnipotence is not concealed.

In the first picture what is suggested by, or rather implied in, the expression, and in the whole treatment, is the perfect human earthly state, the loving commonwealth, where tender ties unite all together, where no discord disturbs the accord, where there is no conflict nor clashing, where even activity has ceased and the need of it is forgotten, where all are melted together by the exquisite emotion which seems so simple and pure, as though all time were ended there and transmuted into eternity, a never-ending present; yet, because the human consciousness is never still, but always breathing and pulsating, always enlarging and enriching itself, there are suggestions of other emotions, currents of feeling leading off everywhither, and thus preserving the whole consciousness from sameness and weariness. But the ideal is still a human one, still bounded by this actual world, and its requirements, and its possibilities. The deep questions of *whence* and *whither* are only faintly suggested, if suggested at all. The future is lost in the present. Existence is fixed at its sweetest point. It is very beautiful. It is perfect of its kind. What is so beautiful as love? What is so perfect as love? This, even the common soul recognizes, is the quintessence of life, that which determines the worth of everything else, that to which everything else is sought only as a means, that which the soul feels and acknowledges by its inmost instinct to be very near the secret and the explanation of all existence.

The Virgin's face suggests all this. It depends



upon this ideal for its spiritual beauty and its attractiveness. It is because the human heart welcomes such a state of things as of all things the dearest and most desirable,— this freedom to dwell forever in this the most blissful of all emotions, tender, human love,— forgetting, for the time being, whether it is the supreme emotion or not, refraining to doubt whether it is eternal after all, or to ask what may be the conditions for its eternity.

Can we imagine the spectator's eye, which has thus been rapt into sympathy with the sweet, womanly face in the St. Sebastian, to turn from it to the other picture, it would be likely to become troubled, to sink from its dream, at the suggestion of these latter questions. For this relation of tender love between mother and child and other sympathizing ones, exists in a world apart, and the rest of the universe is forgotten. There are other relations and other facts, which, if allowed to enter the mind, will trouble it. Such a state of things is only a dream after all, dissipated at the first contact with the real. It will not bear any scrutiny to discover whether it have the conditions of perpetuity. A work of Art to have beauty of the highest kind must be universal in its suggestiveness. All possibilities must be implicit there, in such a manner that the key to arrange them is not unperceived. What is wanting, after all, in this picture, is the suggestion of the ultimate beauty of a perfected universe. It seizes but a fragment of that universe, and at some antecedent point gives us a miniature heaven, but one that must break



up and vanish before the stern conflict that is to usher in the ultimate and everlasting one. The soul of man must leave this exquisite and rosy calm to plunge into the sublime and stormy belts that have to be passed through ere the illimitable vistas of the final heavens open their lucid depths and disclose their shadowless magnificence.

Ere one can lapse from the ideal state upon which is dependent the beauty of the St. Sebastian, and reach the ideal state upon which depends the beauty of the Madonna di San Sisto, imagination must transport him through this intervening process. In the first picture we have the dearest and loveliest of human relations consecrated by contact with what is Divine. In the second picture we have the Divine relation itself, showing itself under the limitations of the human. That God is to be worshiped not merely as the benevolent and condescending One, but as the just and omnipotent One, who may rightly be feared, who is of necessity severe to whatever is alien to his own holy love; that he can be worshipped rightly by human ones, only as they acknowledge their need to share the consequences of this severity,—these are the thoughts which underlie this ideal, and whose traces linger in the faces of this picture. Here we have the beauty which implies the need of reconciliation, and reconciliation accomplished. All this may be read in these countenances taken as a group. In the face of the child we have the infant Son of Man, Him who is to judge the world. He looks into infinity, and his mother's look follows his. The

feeling his look gives is not unmixed with terror, and she, too, catches faintly the same celestial and lofty frown. The impulse of the beholder, after regarding either face, is to cast down one's eyes. Each dwells in a region we have not yet reached, and to share and make part of the beauty of which we are not yet prepared. In this transcendent realm the ideal relation between all-human souls can only be had when each soul is in true relation to God. This, then, is the highest and most beautiful state, beyond which there is nothing which Art can aim to show. The *Madonna di San Sisto* belongs entirely to Romantic Art, utterly and cleanly separated from the essential characteristics of the Classic ideal; which cannot be said of the *St. Sebastian*.

The subordinate features of both pictures are in entire accord with the dominant ideal as expressed in the chief figures. The human faces catch, in milder form, the same expression with that of the Virgin and the Child; in the one, sweet, human tenderness, forgetful of any possible disaster; in the other, Divine tenderness, not unmixed with severity, and with no oversight of the conflict impending. The same is true of the angelic faces. In Raphael's picture they are cherubs,—children, but still spirits of wisdom, beautiful, but yet very serious and powerful, looking as though they might be the instruments of the Divine severity still, even though rapt in present adoration. In Correggio's picture they are bright-eyed, sportive, in keeping with the soft and delicious feeling that pervades the whole;—a

setting of various beauty around the perfect gem of Virgin and Child. They show the *insouciance* and the playfulness into which human love, in its supreme content with itself, is always prompted to break. Some of the angelic figures are maturer than others, linked in closer sympathy to the mother, as others are to the child; and all, in their outlines, and suggested motions, full to the finger-tips with exquisite tender grace. Either painter seems to have worked after the true idea of angelic existence, if anything distinct from human,—of a spirit bound by no limitations of matter, but finding all its resources flexible and fluent to enable him to express to human ones his mission of immediate sympathy or activity. The idea seems to be that a pure and holy spirit, out of his own intrinsic potency and energy, has the power, at will, to effloresce into a form related to the material world, such as may express himself and his mission to senses prepared to meet him.

Thus, then, we may examine these two pictures to discover the ideal perfection which was in the Artist's mind, and the display of which constitutes their charm to the beholder. To find what this is in any work of Art, and thus to what grade of beauty it belongs, is what I mean by the Higher Criticism. The critic may thus prefer one work of Art to another, and be able to vindicate his preference by giving its ground, yet acknowledge that in other respects it is inferior to that other. If the inferiority is marked, it will, so far, diminish or impair any delight in it and

bring down the general estimate. Its defects may be so disturbing as to lower its absolute worth, even though its ideal aim be high. The Artist has lacked invention, or technical skill, or something, so that he has not been able to harmonize the elements of his work, or subtly to adjust into perfect keeping the various excellent attainments according to the grades of their dignity. Critics here show their subjective partiality, and he is an inferior one who judges only from the technical excellence; and he is an imperfect one who leaves it out of view. The passion for physical beauty is so strong with some men, the delight in it so intense, that they labor under a bias and become almost incapable of the Higher Criticism. The charm of color, especially in the intricate infinities of human flesh, is so mysterious and fascinating that some almost measure a painter's merit by his success in dealing with it. Such an observer is ready, perhaps, to claim for it a higher excellence than any beauty of form. The latter he can follow and understand, or at least its meaning can be pointed out and made intelligible; but the former, he may think, is elusive, and a Divine secret, suggestive of subtle harmonies in the physical universe, and of the ultimate Transfiguration. The fact that man is the only animal that has flesh in its display of the infinities of color, may suggest that he alone is part of that glorified universe, and that other animals belong to this, which is perishable. No loveliness of color, even of the humming-birds or the birds of Paradise, is living, is glowing



with its own life, but shines with the lustre of light reflected, and its charm is from without, and not from within.

Any picture, or statue, or poem, or musical composition, or even many buildings, may be thus critically examined, and be found to give some hints of the permanent ideal of the artist and its implications; though, undoubtedly, a wrong judgment might be easily reached and rested in, from attention too superficial, or to too few of his productions. When this is discovered, to judge of the absolute worth of his work, according as it depends for its excellence upon this ideal as permanent or transitory, is what I mean by the Higher Criticism; higher because more immediately derived from a philosophy: from which it would follow that only he can be the perfect critic who, in addition to other gifts and acquisitions, has the philosophic mind. This is required to judge of the elevation, the truth and the richness of the ideal. The perfect critic, indeed, will not be regardless of any lower excellencies or defects. And that critic, or that observer, is to be pitied who has no eye or ear for some of these, who has a poor appreciation of the beauty of color, or of form, or of the melody of verse; or who cannot admire the skill of the artist in inventing situations, or triumphing over difficulties. The comparative value which the observer will set upon this, that, or the other excellence is a part of his subjectivity. This is the variable element, and here is where argument should never enter, and enters in vain. He whose ear is defective, and



unable to enjoy the rhythm and cadences, the melody and harmonies of fine verse, can never be convinced that a poem with these characteristics may deserve to be ranked higher than another, whose meaning is more lofty, or whose imagery is more striking. A true criticism will abandon the attempt, therefore, to fix accurately the relative worth of a work of art in comparison with another, and will occupy itself, rather, with the endeavor to discover its absolute worth; that is, its worth relative to the highest note of excellence in every one of the particulars as to which it can be judged,—such as technical skill, mastery of the capabilities of form or color, or of sound, liveliness of fancy, or inventiveness, the ability to penetrate deeply into character, or to display the whole truth, whether of man, or tree, or mountain. All this may be successfully and admirably done, and the attempt be still to be made, the highest critical aim of all,—the discovery of the ideal aspect of the universe, which explains the deepest meaning of the artistic work, and may, perhaps, determine its duration in the fond admiration of human kind.

Hidden in the mind of every man is his Philosophy,—which may or may not be also his Religion. A skillful Socratic questioning could elicit it even from the answers of the rudest mind. Most men are unaware that they have it, though they think by it and act upon it. Educated men are often at pains to conceal it. The artist of high quality is usually one who cannot conceal it, whose irrepressible impulse is

to tell it, to tell it even when he disguises it. These Poets, whether painters, sculptors, architects, musical creators, or artificers of verse, tell us more of their souls and their inner secrets than any other men. He who ventures upon an ambitious work of Art challenges all other men to find out that upon which his heart is fixed, if they can. This is the profoundest distinction between the poetic and the prosaic way of thinking,—that the former seeks to retire to the center in order to contemplate and feel the harmony of the whole; while the latter finds its uneasy realm in the changes and perturbations which rush over the surface.

All appreciation or criticism is liable to be contorted, if an artificial and untrue philosophy happens to have been admitted into the mind. The materialistic Pantheist, for illustration, has endeavored to put away from himself the power to value and enjoy the highest excellence, the most perfect beauty of any work of Art. He should, consistently, judge it by the standard of a lower ideal. And if so, the question arises, whether there *are* any permanent and common elements in all subjective impressions, which are not idiosyncratic, and which, therefore, as unchangeable, are a part of the true objective. Some attention to this problem I now give.

If Beauty, though relative to a percipient, is a mode of the Divine activity, an element in the Divine consciousness, and is therefore rooted in the essential and immutable constitution of things, the perception of it cannot be put away by any theory;

and the materialistic Pantheist, in spite of his disavowal, may still retain the ability to enjoy the highest beauty in nature or of a work of Art; though, as a result of the habit of mind induced by his theory, he may have impaired his gratification. The consistent evolutionist would account for the alleged pleasure by declaring it to be an inherited prejudice, or a manufactured delusion. Such his system ought to regard it. This work of Art cannot legitimately have any such Beauty as is claimed for it, or inspire any such lofty emotion. There is no such state of things possible as that which is said to explain its Beauty and the emotion. Thus it would appear that man has transcended in his thought the possibilities of existence, and elicited from and for his imaginary structure an emotion which has no justification. But "facts are stubborn things." Whatever comes to pass must have its explanation in its antecedents. And here is this emotion. Whence came it? How has man—evolved from beneath and the product of the lower forces—become able to transcend himself, to reach forward into the remote, to make gratification in the unreal and impossible as indubitable and as intense as in the real? If it be said that all this power was wrapped up and concealed in the lower forces which have brought him on thus far,—as the power coiled up in the spring, slowly unrolling itself, cannot be measured merely by the eye, which observes the almost insensible motion,—then it may be replied, if so, how do we know that we have reached the



limit of the unrolling, and that the ultimate state of things may not be the very one which this highest beauty presupposes, and upon which alone its emotion is legitimated?

This apprehension of the highest beauty, even in the consciousness of the materialistic Evolutionist, cannot, then, be thought away successfully. It cannot be undermined and made to dissipate by any disproof of the truth of the instinctive vaticination upon which it depends. There is a hollowness about the mockery that mocks it that will make that mockery collapse in suicide. This philosopher cannot account for it upon his theory, and it returns again and again to trouble him.

If, then, this emotion of the highest beauty cannot be exterminated even by him who willfully attempts to do it, and if it exist in various degrees of intensity in those who make no such attempt, faint indeed often, but still traceable,—then, surely, we have reached something permanent, fixed, unchangeable,—an unalterable element in human subjectivity, which must itself, then, be a part of the objective reality.

It becomes, then, a matter of induction and testimony whether these are facts indeed. The universality of the Art-impulse, and of the enjoyment which comes from it, in all races, presupposes an appreciation of the element of the Beautiful in all existence, even though very crude and with no discriminating ability. The fact that this appreciation can be educated and carried to the ultimate, and exists in its natural *naïveté*, irrespective of all conscious adoption

of any philosophic scheme, would seem to establish, almost beyond denial, that the highest form of it has valid objective ground, and is as legitimate as any lower form.

My thesis, then, is this: Whatever in the emotion of the Beautiful can only be explained from the ideal of the ultimate perfection, which is the normal and essential constitution of the universe, is the common element in all subjectivity, and thus a part of the true objective. This element is, therefore, invariable and ineradicable, though admitting of degrees of vividness in consciousness, and we can erect its requirements into a standard by which to ascertain the absolute value of a work of Art.

Whatever Beauty is of a lower kind, true, indubitable, but dependent upon an ideal state of things that is transient, and which accounts for the emotion of lower grade, appeals to what is idiosyncratic in subjectivity, and is therefore dependent for its degree, though not for its existence, upon the modes of human character and the predominant tastes in the conventional life.

What I mean may, perhaps, be made apparent by thinking that possibly there may be some men so imbruted, so destitute of human tenderness, as that the ideal upon which the beauty of expression in the St. Sebastian depends has no attraction for them, and does not strike an answering chord; but that there is no man of ordinary culture who would not be seized by the expression in the Madonna di San Sisto, because of this element of severity, which



marks that the ultimate Beauty is not yet reached, or at least that, in the attempt to portray it or to hint of it, it must still bear the mark of its antecedent history. Whatever thus in human emotion is necessary to seize any constituent of the ultimate Beauty is common in all subjectivity. And that emotion is subjective purely, and variable, which is relative to any state of things stopping short of the ultimate perfection. To judge by the standard of the former is, then, a more philosophic effort, which, therefore, I call the Higher Criticism.

Subordinate inquiries might now be entered into to determine what are the essential elements of the ultimate perfection; whether, in the synthesis which makes up complete and harmonized existence, the permanent elements of its physical aspect can be dispensed with; whether, for illustration, color does not belong to the permanent, the eternity-form, rather than to the transient, the time-form; whether melodious and harmonized sound does not likewise; whether shape itself is not as permanent as space, etc. But I pretermit these inquiries, merely observing that he is rash who thinks that much cannot be said for the affirmative alternative of all these propositions.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SUBLIME AND THE PATHETIC IN ART.

SINCE I have contrasted the beauty which depends upon the attractiveness of a state of things that is transitory with that which depends upon the ultimate reality, which is permanent, what of the region between the two? What of the passage from one to the other? That there has been or is to be a transition is implied, I have said, in Raphael's picture. The beauty of Correggio's, notwithstanding all its fascination, is of that which has to break up. It is a momentary and delusive calm, which has to change into the storm ere the final peace. Here, now, in this mid-region are to be found many of the chief works of Romantic Art. This is the region of the Sublime and the Pathetic. That the distinction between Classic and Romantic Art cannot be sharply carried into the concrete, that the two are not cleanly separable in fact and in time as they may be in thought, is shown by the fact that the Pathetic and the Sublime are to be found in Greek and Roman Art. They break through the Classic ideal, for they are founded in the existing human nature, belong to matters of which men cannot long remain in ignorance. Hence we have the Niobe and the Laocoön, as well as the Antinous, or the Medicean

Venus; but the Pathetic in these is still distinguishable from that in Romantic Art, as I shall notice presently. And in Greek and Roman Poetry the Classic ideal is constantly transcended; for the freer spirit, with its wider range, of the Poet proper must bring itself face to face with these facts and problems, and give us the Sublime and the Pathetic still, though in such forms as show that they have sprung from the Classic ideal and its suppositions, rather than that they are moving into the Romantic ideal with *its* presuppositions.

Let me, then, endeavor to distinguish the emotions and characteristics of the Sublime and the Pathetic, which are near akin, in Romantic Art, in order to discover what common element of all subjectivity is to be found even here, and thus bring such works within the range of the Higher Criticism. Much of the interest of these works will be purely contingent, indeed, and must be judged by a lower standard. But is there anything in the Sublime, as such, that can belong to the ultimate perfection? It would seem that the Pathetic is, indeed, alien; yet even this may show itself in a work of the highest order, as legitimately as the element of severity may show itself in Raphael's Madonna. To determine the true meaning of the Sublime and the Pathetic, we must first recover some of our threads of thought.

The movement in the history of the human mind which made Romantic Art possible may be characterized as the undeifying of nature. In the early periods nature weighed down the spirit, was too vast

for it, before the spirit had discovered its dignity and its freedom. Hence it could only endeavor to express in symbol the vague and overpowering thought which oppressed it. In the Classic period there is a momentary equilibrium. The spirit accepts nature as a fixed fact, finds respects of identity and coalescence, discovers that it is itself the choicest form of existence, finds in nature the capacity for the expression of its highest thought of itself, forgets everything else, every possibility of change, and rests content for a brief period in its vision of Beauty.

But as the human soul enlarges, expands and deepens, it finds at length that nature is plastic only in one respect, and only for a moment; that she still presents contradictions which spirit cannot triumph over; yet, recognizing its own superior dignity, and that the actual relation is a reversal of the ideal one, abandons nature, and withdraws within itself in its own sufficiency and ideal completeness. Nature is set away, — made aloof, — gifted with an independence; yet is discovered to be itself in movement, in a state of transition, and therefore possible to be moulded by spirit after its own caprice. The spirit retires from nature, refuses allegiance, and returns to it as ideally its master. The world becomes in its thought a world of accident, and human impulses themselves seemingly accidental, — free and not deliberate, or deliberate only according to subjective caprice. Thus nature, regarded as alien, becomes pliant, and may be dealt with in an entirely unrestrained manner.

This accounts for the free handling which the world receives at the hands of the Romantic Poets and Painters, for the representation of wild adventure, for the temporary phase of chivalry, for the Realistic treatment of Dutch and Flemish and much of modern Art, for the attempts to fix nature in her transient aspects, as in landscape pictures, and human life in its transient modes, for the evanescent beauty caught by the canvas, or the verse, and for the delectable incongruities of humorous works. This is the secret of *genre* paintings, and of nine-tenths of the verse now for many years so prolifically written. The mind no more loses confidence in its right and its ability to deal with nature thus freely, because it possesses the conviction, or the suspicion, that changes must be made in itself before any changes can be made in nature. Its own struggles and aspirations after ethical perfection are set forth in Art, and by symbols,—symbols more adequate than those in ancient Art, because expressing clearer ideas. Hence Poetry finds expression of the soul's ideal virtues and excellencies and moral beauties in nature, which becomes symbolic after a new manner: and thus is displayed a mode of dealing with imagery quite distinct from anything in very ancient Art. I doubt whether there is an image in Homer where nature is used to symbolize the peculiar graces of the soul for which Modern Poetry has found analogies so plentiful.

Hence Music has so wondrously enlarged its scope to express the new modes of spirit; and thus we



may see, perhaps, that Music and Poetry, if not Painting likewise, can always adjust themselves to any possible novel modes of spirit; for spirit, thus far, has shown nothing cyclical in its development, but a steady, onward movement. Hence, too, the doubt whether Sculpture, as a pure Art, has not exhausted itself, and can have no future but to reproduce the past, or to borrow the intent of Painting, beside which it must always acknowledge its comparative inadequacy to suggest action and subtle and varied expression. Hence, too, the doubt whether Architecture has any future. One is indeed puzzled to imagine how it can have anything new before it, anything but varied phases and combinations of the old ideas. One is tempted to hold the same opinion about Painting, since it is so hard to conjecture anything new for it, any new faith or mode of symbolization, and seeing the rudderless efforts of modern painters. But I do not share this doubt, but think, rather, that Painting, too, may be included, as well as Poetry and Music, in the prediction of a new future for Art, though that be very dimly seen as yet, and no one has been able to give a very confident report. I cannot think of a more interesting speculation than one that would give us a hope in this respect sufficient to awaken our enthusiasm.

Romantic Art may, then, have three or four distinct aims: First, to express the vision of the ultimate perfection in symbol, by the human countenance, or by nature, in her suggestions of form or glories of color; secondly, to deal with nature and

human life as material to be worked up according to subjective caprice, and in this effort two diverging tendencies display themselves—Pure Realism, which deals with the transient or accidental, and the Ideal treatment, which in its freedom of range may bring back and borrow the Classic Ideal, or clarify the Romantic, or mingle the two; and thirdly, to exhibit the characteristics of the transit,—the contradiction and the conflict. This is the region of the Pathetic and the Sublime, and a field quite inexhaustible, and where, perhaps, the interest in Romantic Art culminates. And here it dawns upon us that Painting may still find a field. The clearness with which the conditions of this conflict are seen and its truth displayed will determine the absolute worth of such artistic aims in the estimate of the Higher Criticism. But we have still to be busy in endeavoring to fix the true notion, for Art, of the Pathetic and the Sublime.

Man is represented as having reached the completer understanding of himself and the world he lives in, and the discovery that all ideals hitherto realized were of something transitory; that even the one arrested for devotion that seemed to have completeness and to be for the imagination satisfactory has contradictions within itself that will shatter and destroy it. The subtle sympathy and connection between the physical disorders of the universe and the moral disorders of humanity, which was now and then, even in the early periods, suspected, comes to have assurance at length; till the conviction is

reached and the truth felt, if not understood and expressed, that violation of moral law is the source of all disorder; that sin is the fundamental contradiction; that the ultimate condition, which alone can be satisfying to the æsthetic sense, must be one in which all the aspects of being are set in their proper relation, in which the synthesis is remade, wrong relations reversed, and a perfect correspondence brought about between the ethical, intellectual and physical elements which, in all concrete existence, can never be separated. Captivated by this ideal of the ultimate Beauty, the human mind becomes more and more painfully sensible of the shortcoming of the Real, of its contrast with the Ideal. The mind of the born Artist, then, may dwell mainly upon the fascinating vision of the ultimate glory, to comprehend which taxes to the utmost all the intellect, to figure which stimulates to the uttermost the imagination, and in his works he may give hints or glimpses of it, momentary or more or less prolonged, endeavoring to describe it or to symbolize it in some way; or he may occupy himself with the details of the interval, of the stormy passage to the ultimate perfection, and present situations which appeal to the sympathies and are pathetic, or which task the imagination to fill or reproduce them, and which are therefore sublime; or, feeling inadequate to endeavors so high, may absorb himself in the present reality, dealing with the material of the world according to his fancy, fixing men or nature in some moment of temporary interest, some vanishing phase of the pas-



sage and the conflict that conceals, rather than brings to light, the contradiction. Thus, instead of Tragedy we have Comedy; instead of historic we have *genre* pictures; instead of aiming after such true pathos as Sculpture is still competent to express, we have the modern realistic groups, perpetuating transitory and worthless situations in figures which lack all the charm that Painting or Poetry might give. A disquisition is needed to examine the capabilities of Landscape Painting to meet the requirements of the Higher Criticism, which I am loth to omit, but must. As for the figure Painters in these days, they seem in a state of bewilderment, and the whole Art to have no definite aims. They are becoming aware of their inability to reproduce or rival the classic or mediæval excellence, and it is an acknowledged instance of bad taste or misdirected power to attempt a Madonna. Religious pictures, for the most part, seem anachronisms; and there is an air of unreality, of unfaith, about them. Our Painters rarely even attempt the Pathetic and the Sublime, though here would seem to be an inviting field in which they might succeed. They toil in the search after out-of-the-way situations, which have little worth, appeal to no deep sympathies, belong to the superficial side of life. The prevalent taste is to treat groups of figures of men and animals simply as studies of picturesque arrangement and brilliant effects of color, or of dignified attitudes and graceful motions, and the skill in this particular is something wonderful. All which is pleasing, but which

we contemplate with a sigh that the Art of Painting has not yet found any new lofty aim.

The conclusion is this:—if in an artistic performance anything is borrowed from the ideal of the ultimate perfection, it may be, if adequately rendered, said to belong to High Art. If it deals with what has no permanence, or intrinsic worth, it is low in its aim, and can only be rescued from speedy neglect by its success in dealing with the mystery of Color or of Sound, or appealing to some transient sympathy.

If it aim after the Sublime or the Pathetic, its success may bring it into the category of High Art, while its failure will sink it in absolute worth below the successes of the Realist.

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Classic Art did not shun the Pathetic. Even in Sculpture, which generally avoided it, we have the Niobe, or the Laocoön, which, however, according to our definition, some might think to be works not Classic, but remembrances, or anticipations of the Romantic modes of thought. But, indeed, these have the distinctive pathos belonging to the Classic period. In the Greek Tragedies we have similar pathos. What characterizes these is the display of a situation implying the rigidity of the decrees of Fate, the mournfulness of the compelled destiny of humanity. This, requiring in the auditor or witness an imaginative reproduction, appeals to his sympathies, gives him delight, not from satisfaction with



the situation, but from his own mental activity, and possibly from the consciousness of his own immunity. What is noticeable in the Greek Pathos is, that there is no consolation for it; no hope held out, no suggestion that the sad situation has an inner bright side, that it is remedial, and has atoning worth; no consecration of human suffering as a means of purification; no bit of blue sky piercing the murky clouds and beckoning into the infinite; while in the Christian Pathetic there is often a delicious pleasure, and one is reconciled to the pain, even in the imagination of it, and would be content to endure the same, from love, or in the way of penance. It is not all sad. The suffering is often only joy. This discovery and this feeling are uniquely Christian. Pain is borne cheerfully, not for one's own sake merely, but for others' as well. It is felt by a sublime instinct to be vicarious. The pain sought and borne by the Hindoo devotee has been purely individualistic. Even the disciple of Buddha, though moved by sympathy to relieve and diminish suffering, has his end in himself, and not in the totality. There is many a so-called Christian martyr who has been so from Oriental, or Pagan, rather than on purely Christian grounds.

In the Romantic period, when the Pathetic is attempted, this will be the ground of distinction. The Pathos, after all, may be only Greek or Oriental, either the mournfulness of submission to the inevitable, or the fainter admiration of stoical endurance. If, however, the vicarious characteristic is suggested

or implied, so as to be recognized, the Pathetic is then lifted up into the region of the Sublime, and becomes High Art. In the Classic Pathos, that which lies out of sight, concealed, is the inexorable Fate. In Christian Pathos, that which is below, but not entirely hidden, is the absolute Justice, which will openly, at length, reverse all wrongs, and meanwhile catch up their results into the current of its Providence, as masteringly as all results of good, making them remedial and purifying. This hopefulness is never lost sight of in the Shakespearean Tragedies. The sky is left clear after the storm. A brighter day than the past will dawn, now that this gloom has come to its end.

The Pathetic, I have said, may become the Sublime. This is the case when it shows us heroism, unusual spiritual strength to act or endure, taxing the imagination to measure it. But the Sublime is not necessarily the Pathetic. If it be merely physical size, or strength, or persistence of will to contend with or vanquish difficulties, and have no moral meaning, it will have no absolute worth as an element of the ultimate Ideal, or as an essential moment of the successful transit. Size and strength are only relative, and have no absolute standard to measure degrees of much or little. The living beetle may be strong, and the dying elephant weak, though the convulsive struggles of the beast might crush a thousand of the insects. Pompeii was full of great buildings, but the lava from the small mountain overwhelmed them all. As soon as imagination is

adequate to fill the required strength or size, it ceases to be a sublime effort. But if there is moral heroism to be contemplated, imagination always falls short, and hence its effort is always an emotion of the Sublime. Strength of will, even in the cause of evil, may be sublime, for this exhaustless potency is similar to the same in the holy struggles; yet one has no faith in its permanence, and admiration of it is sapped by this doubt, since it has no valid objective ground. But the abstract spiritual strength entitles it to belong to High Art. It is this, then, which brings about the approval of the Higher Criticism, such strength suggested as is needed to carry this heroism beyond its own necessity,—to turn sacrifice into spontaneity, to give it thus a leading toward the ultimate Beauty, upon whose bosom it will expire. Works that are sublime according to this high standard are rare enough.

Architecture, of course, is never pathetic. Its ordinary aim is to be beautiful, yet it may be said to have sublime characteristics, in the mysterious and bewildering aspiration of the Gothic, or in the repose and suggested infinity of the Egyptian, or even in the ambient sweep of the interior of the dome. In all these cases imagination is somewhat baffled, and its tension is the emotion of the Sublime.

Sculpture rarely aims to be pathetic. The *Pietà* is, rather, beautiful and touching. When it does, as in the *Niobe*, or *Laocoön*, or *Dying Gaul*, it takes *very strong* hold of Christian sympathy. It rarely,

also, aims to be sublime, though the unmeasurable strength of the Farnese Hercules, the powerful repose in the head of Jupiter, the Moses of Michael Angelo, a true human king, and his mystic figures in the Medicean chapel,—all have sublime characteristics; yet in none of these sculptures have we the highest form of the Sublime, the spiritual strength beyond ordinary human reach, which immolates itself in loving sacrifice for the whole.

But in Painting we have every variety of the Pathetic and the Sublime. So, too, in Poetry. Nor is Music incapable of it, for it can utter the secret murmurs of feeling which accompany any of the currents of thought. Illustrations from Poetry or Painting would be so numerous that it would be mere cataloguing to speak of them, and nothing would be gained for thought thereby; while an elaborate study and analysis of various sublime pictures, or poems, or dramas, would justify us in giving the estimate of highest worth to such as depict most truly the terrors and the strength shown in this vivid strife.

There are aims in the Tragic Drama higher than have yet been attempted, successes possible greater than have yet been accomplished; but mankind will not see them till a greater even than Shakespeare is born.



## PART III.

### THE SYSTEM OF THE DIFFERENT ARTS.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### STYLES; CLASSIFICATION.

THE third part of Hegel's work, which is by far the most voluminous, give us his system of the particular Arts, and the treatment of each in detail. Here, too, we find a progression, as we have found it for Art in general, in the historic development. Each Art has had its commencement, its growth, its perfection and degradation.

The general characteristics of all the Arts have been designated as *styles*, and been called the *severe*, the *ideal* and the *graceful*. No Art is characterized by simplicity in its commencement. This is a *result*. One must have triumphed over antecedent difficulties. The Artist must, as the result of repeated trials, have learned how to hide all the previous preparations and anterior scaffoldings, so that the free beauty may appear clearly in one burst. It is here as with the manners of a well-cultured man, who in all that he says and does shows himself simple, free and natural. These are qualities which he seems to possess as a gift of nature, but which in



him, however, are the fruit of perfect culture. Thus, logically and historically, Art in its commencements appears unnatural, coarse, minute in accessories, making painful effort over vestments and ornaments. In Poetry, the first efforts are simple recitations, theogonies, in which are fermenting abstract thoughts badly expressed. In Sculpture, the expression of the early figures is stolid, or of an exaggerated vitality. The external circumstances, on the contrary—the clothing, arms and ornaments—are worked with more care, yet the folds of the drapery are stiff and detached, and do not adjust themselves to the positions of the body, as we see in the early images of the Virgin and the Saints. There cannot properly be said to be *style* till this early stage is passed. When we find the Beautiful indeed, which may be though the work be still rugged and rude, its first form is that of a high simplicity. The Artist has found the essential element and absorbs himself in it, disdaining grace and minuter beautiful adjustments. The *severe* style contents itself with the general and grand impression. Whatever is accidental is banished, in order that mere caprice may not seem to have introduced it.

In the second place we find the *ideal* style, holding a middle place between the severe and the wantonly graceful. Its character is the highest vitality combined with a calm and beautiful grandeur, as we see in Homer, or in the works of Phidias. Here the life is visible everywhere. There is nothing insignificant, nothing which is not expressive, yet the unity is not

concealed. It is the expression of one idea, of one individuality, of one sole action. Yet we find the breath of grace spread over the entire work; the artist has yielded to the impulse which the severe style has repressed, and endeavors to enrich the gratification of the spectator. But *grace*, in the ideal style, still appears as a sort of condescension. The work does not need it. The essential idea is sufficient, and shows that it can exist without these exterior charms, which are benignantly superadded.

But when the balance is lost, and the artist loses himself in these graceful accessories, we have another style. It is apparent now that he depends upon this gratification for the success of his work. The Apollo Belvidere may be said to mark the transition from the high ideal to the *gracious* style. Virgil and Horace thus elaborate their style, in which we descry that their purpose is to give pleasure, and the pains they take to do it. In Architecture, Sculpture and Painting, the graceful style is not content with simple and grand masses, but covers them up with multitudinous details. We may include under this head what may be called the *style for effect*, which employs the severe, the shocking, the colossal (as we often find in Michael Angelo), and striking contrasts, as means of expression. This style manifests a dominant tendency in Art to turn toward the public. It clamors for attention. The two qualities — the calm, self-sufficient independence, and the complaisance to offer one's self to the regard of the spectator — ought to be combined in a perfect equilib-

rium. If Art, in the style severe, is entirely self-inclosed, without showing anything to attract the spectator, it is cold. If it makes too many advances, it pleases indeed, but the impression is not produced by the fundamental idea or its representation. We do not think of the subject itself, but of the Artist, of his knowledge or skill. The French, particularly, have been noted for this style, which flatters the spectator, and seeks above everything else to produce an impression. The Germans, on the other hand, have attached themselves too exclusively to the severe style. Satisfied with the depth and the truth of the idea, they have taken too little pains to make it attractive, to commend it to the general mind.

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Hegel next gives his classification of the Arts, and rejects the common one,—viz: (1) Arts of Design, which represent their ideas by visible forms and colors; (2) Art Musical, which employs sound; (3) Poetry, which employs sound simply as a symbol, and by its means addresses the mind,—as merely external and superficial, and not drawn at all from the nature of the thing itself. For Art has for its object the representation of the *Ideal*. But the *Ideal* is the Absolute itself, and the Absolute is *Spirit*. The Arts, then, should be classified according to the manner by which they are more or less capable of expressing it. This gradation assigns to the Arts their place and rank according to the degree of their spirituality, and this will be found to cor-



respond more or less accurately with their historic progress, which was treated in the second part.

*Architecture* first; for Art commences with this, and that from its very nature; for Art, in its origin, not finding any suitable element or form at hand to express the spiritual struggling within the soul, in its first experiments contents itself with a merely external bond between the idea and the mode of representation. The rough materials at hand can at least express the inner craving for regularity and symmetry; and thus we have a mere gleam of the Spiritual, and Beauty in its lowest form.

Next comes *Sculpture*. Here the Spiritual individuality finds its perfect form and symbol in the corporeal appearance. It is a great advance from Architecture; not, like that, showing its limitation by physical conditions, but seeming aloof and free from them. It can express the idea of Divine existence, in its independence and calm majesty, inaccessible to the troubles and agitations of the active life, to its conflicts and sufferings.

Next come the Arts which represent the soul in its interior or subjective concentration. Of these *Painting* is the first, which reduces the physical form to be only the expression of the internal element. It does not employ heavy matter as it exists in its three dimensions, but only extent of surface, representing objects in relation to each other by the illusion of color. In Architecture and Sculpture the forms are rendered visible by the external light, while in Painting the material draws from itself its

degrees of light, and their relations to each other, and all the phases of Spiritual existence, Divine and human, come within its sphere.

*Music* is the precise opposite to *Painting*. Its proper element is the soul itself, the sentiment invisible, or without form, which cannot manifest itself in its reality, but solely by an external phenomenon, which disappears rapidly, and is constantly effaced.

And lastly comes *Poetry*, the true Art of the Spirit, for all that passes within the soul of man speech only can express. Thus Poetry is necessarily the richest of the Arts. Its domain is unlimited. But while it gains in the range of ideas, it loses on the sensible side. Its physical element is only symbolic, and does not preserve its worth as a physical object. For in it sound does not, as in Music, preserve its worth in itself, in such wise that it is one function of the Art to fashion this sound. In Poetry sound ought to be penetrated by the idea, filled with the determined thought which it expresses, and appear as the simple sign of what it contains.

[The present author cannot but regard this definition of the material of Poetry as defective. Poetry is not independent of *sound*. The first poems were composed to be recited and heard, and not to be read. And nearly every poet, from Homer downward, has had regard to the sensuous charm of his poem when made audible. The art is not perfect when the informing idea is not married to harmonized sweetness and expressiveness of sound. These are to Poetry what purity and harmony of color and



the subtle gradations of light and shadow are to Painting. To enjoy the sweetness of verse, as to produce it, is as much a natural gift, and one impossible to acquire, as is the musical ear itself. The marriage of idea and form is not perfect when the verse is rough and disdainful of the possibilities of sound. It is possible to be so enraptured by the charm of melodious verse as to be unmindful at times of the thought. The thought is temporarily lost in the form, only to emerge again illumined by the light of the form. Nor is this an illustration of the distinction which Hegel has made above between the ideal and the graceful styles, and an abandonment to a mere accessory. That may be true when the thought is poor and is interspersed through the glitter of words; but the profoundest thought only reaches perfect expression when it can give also this sensuous delight. For the physical element of the ultimate perfection is as essential to its beauty as its purely spiritual quality. The beauty of harmonized sweet sounds, in speech as in music, like pure and harmoniously related colors, is mysterious and subtly suggestive. It is the warmer side of all concrete life, of that synthesis of body, thought and feeling which makes up all actual existence, and of which no element can be entirely abstracted in human consciousness.]

As to the modes of representation, Poetry can take those of all the arts. In the Epic it gives to its content the form of *objectivity*—not, indeed, as in the arts of design, presenting it directly to the sight, but

giving its world as seized by imagination under an objective form, which is represented as such to the imagination regarding. But it is also a *subjective* discourse; it is the soul expressing outwardly what it feels within, as in *Lyric Poetry*: and thirdly, Poetry is developed within the limits of a complete *action*, which, represented objectively, manifests, at the same time, the interior sentiments which the spectacle offered to our regard incloses, and thus may be married to music, gestures, etc. This is Dramatic Art, in which man entire is represented, and, in a visible spectacle, a work of art produced by man. These five Arts form a determinate system. Besides these, there are others, so called: Landscape, Histrionics, the Dance, etc. But these we can afford to disregard as something mixed and amphibious. We confine ourselves to those allowing room for fundamental distinctions, with which alone Philosophy is concerned.

## CHAPTER II.

### ARCHITECTURE.

**A**LTHOUGH the actual history of the Arts may be different among different peoples, still Architecture may be said to be historically as well as logically the first. If we inquire after its commencement, we find the hut or cabin as the habitation of man, and the temple as the inclosure consecrated to the worship of the divinity, or in which his adorers assemble. Such constructions are but simple means which suppose an external end. Thus at first is given a need whose satisfaction has nothing in common with the fine arts. In like wise man loves to sing and to dance, and has need to communicate his thought by language, but these are not Music and Poetry. If we perceive any tendency to beautiful form, we have the monition of Art, but not yet its distinct existence. When anything is sought and given as an end in itself, we have that which has become worthy of the name. Here the idea of the thing itself gives rise to the form, and we find that Architecture, from the nature of its material, at first expresses thought in purely symbolic form. But it may go beyond this, as it does when it supplies the environment suitable to the image of the god which it proposes to enshrine, or to man with his

various and complicated needs. Thus fettered, however, it loses the independence of purely symbolic architecture; or, lastly, the two may be united.

Thus we have (1) *Symbolic Architecture*, properly speaking, or *independent*; (2) *Classic Architecture*, which furnishes an inorganic apparel for the image created by the sculptor; and (3) *Romantic Architecture*, in which, although the houses, churches, palaces are but habitations or places of reunion required for human needs, yet, as related but indirectly to this end, they elevate themselves into a sort of independence, and may be said to exist only for themselves. Thus, while Architecture in its fundamental character is always the art eminently symbolic, it is nevertheless susceptible of this division.

1. *Architecture Independent or Symbolic*.—Monuments of this order are, nevertheless, original conceptions and universal thoughts. But at first these conceptions are obscure and undetermined. In laboring to express these, man uses the material at hand to express dimly and suggestively his thought. He has not yet found a perfect form, and so has to be content to express his religious or his intellectual needs in these symbols. But as reflection and experiment proceed, these symbolic representations become more and more particular, and exhibit the transition to the Art of Sculpture. And when this has become an independent art, then Architecture finds another end, to furnish an habitation for the divinity or a place of gathering for the people, and this is the transition to Classic Architecture. Among

the illustrations of Symbolic Architecture may be reckoned the Tower of Babel, the symbol of the dissolution of the primitive society, the family and patriarchal one, and the formation of a newer and vaster one, uniting men by some social or religious tie. Here we have the symbol of the State or the Church. Among the monuments which hold the mid-place between Architecture and Sculpture may be named the Obelisks, whose form is not borrowed from living nature, but is entirely regular. Their destination is not to serve as dwellings or temples. They offer an aspect free and independent, and draw their symbolic significance from the rays of the sun, to whose divinity, according to Pliny, they were consecrated. In the monuments of Persia, too, we find represented rays of fire escaping from the columns. Also, in the same rank may be named the Mëmmons, which, by their grandeur and massive aspect, seem like architectonic forms rather than those of sculpture, especially when the columnar figures were ranged in rows. The same is true of the Sphynxes, which existed in great numbers in Egypt, which also were placed in file to form avenues, that gave them a character perfectly architectonic. The inclosures of the Egyptian temples were open constructions, without roofs or gates, without alleys around the walls or the galleries,—were merely forests of columns, embracing a vast extent. These numberless objects exist, then, simply for the effect they may produce, without serving either as dwellings for the divinity or places for the prayers of his worship-



pers. They might be regarded as books, revealing their meaning, not by their external configuration, but by the characters and images engraved upon their surfaces. But their number and regularity suffice to preserve their architectural character. The Symbolic or independent is the fundamental character of Egyptian architecture. Here the human soul has not yet possessed itself or its tendencies, has not become an object for itself. It makes an effort, it seeks, it aspires, it produces incessantly without being able to satisfy itself fully, and is therefore without relaxation or repose. For it is only in a representation conformed to the spirit, that the spirit, having reached its complete development, can find satisfaction, and thenceforward know how to limit itself in its creations. A Symbolic work of Art, on the contrary, remains more or less indefinite. To Egyptian architecture belong, also, the Labyrinths. These are alley-ways of columns winding around and through each other and among the walls, the pathways being intermingled in an enigmatic manner. Their purpose is not the puerile problem, to find the way of exit, but to furnish an instructive promenade in the midst of Symbolic enigmas, for the roads should represent, in their turnings, the march of the celestial orbs. They are constructed partly above and partly below the ground, and, outside the pathways, are a prodigious number of halls and chambers whose walls are covered with hieroglyphics. These works, however, approach the type of the *house*, as displaying a

further purpose in the subterranean parts, which are intended to be the tombs of the founders and of the sacred crocodiles. We find in them the transition where the Symbolic commences to approach to the Classic architecture. In India, in upper Egypt, in Nubia, and in the mountains of Judea, we find also these subterranean structures. These caverns were often merely places of refuge, but in India, as in Egypt, they were a kind of cathedral meant to inspire a religious surprise, and offer subjects for contemplation. In the caverns of Mithra we find these subterranean windings, representing not only the courses of the stars, but also, in symbols, the stages through which the soul should pass in its purification. But this transition, of which we speak, is most marked in the Egyptian tombs. In Egypt first the immortality of the individual soul becomes a received and powerfully motive article of belief. Hence the care to preserve the body in its individuality, as essential to the complete humanity, and to furnish a shrine worthy of the dignity it has acquired in social life. The most eminent examples of these were the Pyramids. While these have a purpose, yet not as in the dwelling does the rectangular form prevail, but the structure rests upon itself from base to summit. Its unity is so apparent as to cast out of thought all detail. Thus it seems to have its end in itself.

2. We reach now Architecture properly so-called, that is to say, subordinated to a positive end. The mere mechanic production of the useful and conven-

ient dwelling is not Art. It is only when some result is reached by it, intended for the imagination, some result of beauty, that we have Art. To adapt this to the exterior needs of use and convenience is the task of the Architect. This result he reaches first, without abandoning the useful in any way, yet by transcending the simplicity which use requires, by substituting the curved often for the straight line, by arrangements of symmetry, by approaching organic and living forms in the structure itself, and in the ornaments, and even by regarding the sweetness and harmony of the constituent colors. This union of the two purposes is best illustrated by the history of the improvement and perfection of the *column*. This is intended essentially for support. A bastard column which does not support is a lie. But the column may be so treated as to make the force required to support be, for the eye, reduced to a *minimum*. (The triumphal columns, as those of Trajan, and the column in the *Place Vendôme*, are simply pedestals for a statue, and are besides clothed with bas-reliefs in honor of the hero.) Architecture may use the human form as well as other organic forms. Hence we find among the Greeks the *Cariatides*. But these can only be employed of small dimensions; when otherwise, they offer the character of oppression, and their costume is that of slaves condemned to carry heavy burdens. The most natural organic form for sustentation is that of the *tree*, where the trunk carries its massive, various and beautiful burden, yet so as to give the impression of



ease and lightness. The Egyptians made use of this form, but not very successfully. All is of a mathematically regular form, hence constrained and not free. These columns resemble rather what are called *arabesques*. These in their idea belong to the transition from the forms of organic nature to the severely regular forms. They are neither one thing nor the other, these impossible trees, plants, leaves, flowers, animals, and hence their use has been often criticised. Raphael, we know, made abundant use of his skill in treating arabesques. But, on the other hand, it is contended that this infidelity to nature is permissible for the art of Architecture, for it is only by allowing latitude here, that the living forms can be made supplementary to the chief aim of the architect, and enrich and enhance the beauty of the main design. In the column, however, we see united the two ends. The beautiful column borrows a form from nature, and gives it a regular and geometrical configuration, and so presses it into the service of the useful. Here, now, Architecture occupies its true place and becomes a high art. It transforms the useful into the beautiful. Since it cannot represent spirit and thought in their true reality, it can still so fashion the dull matter as to offer a simple reflection of the same.

It belongs to Classic Architecture, that its regulating principle comes from without, imposes its conditions and determines its fundamental form, and it is not permitted that the materials used nor any *fantasy in ornamentation* shall be independent, and for

itself alone, as may be the case in Symbolic or Romantic Architecture. Accessory circumstances, too, must determine it,—the climate, the location, the surrounding landscape; and, to observe all these conditions, and be conformed to its purpose, yet to produce a work, all of whose parts shall converge in a true unity,—this is the problem whose perfect solution ought to reveal the taste and talent of the Architect. Among the Greeks this end is only imperfectly reached in the open constructions, the colonnades and stairways; or among the Romans in their private dwellings, public baths, theaters, circuses, aqueducts and fountains. In such edifices, where utility remains as the prominent character, beauty has no place but as ornament. The end is only reached in the religious sphere, in the *temple*, which serves as the shrine for a divine object, that has already been fashioned, the statue of the god. Yet notwithstanding these limitations, this Architecture to us now appears more free than the symbolic structures of the anterior period. It is in one sense more free than Sculpture, which is forced to adopt the human form, such as it offers itself, and to preserve its essential proportions, while Classic Architecture may invent its own plan and general configuration, after an end entirely intellectual. However, its domain remains limited, and a treatise on Classic Architecture, on account of the mathematical rigor of its form, is something generally abstract and of inevitable dryness. On this account it has been called by Frederick Schlegel *frozen music*.



The analysis of the Grecian temple, which here follows, is very thorough and interesting, but as the same is to be found substantially in any work on Grecian Architecture, it is omitted, though reluctantly; and also the distinctions between the different orders, and the briefer notice of the Roman Architecture.

3. Next we consider the *Gothic or Romantic Architecture*. While the characteristic of this order is that it unites the two ends of the Symbolic and the Classic, *i. e.*, of the independent and the dependent, it is by no means a fusion of the two forms, the Oriental and the Greek. But still more than even in the Greek temple, the useful purpose, the house, furnishes the fundamental type, while at the same time effacing as much as possible the simple utility. The building is reared independent of this end, free for itself and beautiful. This triumph over the merely useful requirement is its first characteristic. Secondly, we find that here the largest diversity and multiplicity have a free field, without dissipating the unique effect in simple details. The eye finds a similar satisfaction in the minuter parts, which are repetitions of the fundamental idea, to that awakened by the entire structure. Just as the Christian spirit withdraws itself into its own interior, so the Christian church is an inclosure, shut in on all sides, where the faithful may reunite and refresh themselves inwardly. But, as the Christian soul lifts itself above earthly surroundings, and becomes free of their determination, so its architecture displays

this same determination toward the infinite. This is in great contrast to the open and severe expression of the Greek temple, which, in its superficial extent and its openness, courts the external, for the cathedral lifts itself as high as possible in its impulse toward the infinite. This same forgetfulness of the external world, of the agitations and interests of the earthly life, ought to be produced also in all its subordinate parts. We have no more the open porticos and the galleries inviting approach. A place for them is reserved, but with quite another signification, in the interior of the edifice. The light of the sun is intercepted, or its rays reach the interior subdued by pictures in colored glass. To the beholder is not offered external nature, but a world made for him alone, appropriate for meditation, for the interview of the soul with God and with itself.

The artistic methods and mechanical means by which these ends are reached are treated of at length. The result is, where attained, that in this interior is place found for all the people, and all the interests of life, so various, which touch upon the religious relation, find something harmonious and suggestive. There is no division of benches and seats firmly fixed within this vast space. Each one comes and goes tranquilly, finds a temporary and movable seat, or prays upon his knees and moves away. All religious acts are going on at once. But all this variety and change does not disturb the effect of the vast extent and height. Nothing fills it completely. Everything passes rapidly. The momentary fact is not

visible but in its rapid instability. Above all still rears itself the immensity whose aspiration nothing can disturb.

Externally, as within, the most profuse ornamentation need not interfere with the simple and entire expression. When it does, Art has fallen from its pure and lofty purpose. But within this limit ornamentation is not only permissible but required in this architecture. For the Christian soul, in entering into its new world, may still repeople it and fill it with symbols appropriate to the new thoughts, beliefs and hopes.

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Landscape gardening unites the picturesque with the architectural element. A garden ought to be an agreeable inclosure, and nothing more, and should not aim at the loftier purposes of the high arts. It is a landscape, made not by pigments, but by the forms and colors of nature. Its forms may be irregular, as in Nature, or regular, as in Architecture, in which case it is an out-door suite of apartments, and taste is not violated in either plan. Gardens may afford locations for edifices, beautiful in themselves, and nooks very suitable and undisturbed for statues, though when these are multiplied so as to make of the garden a mere out-door gallery, the taste is bad, for statuary reaches its highest expression in the seclusion of the interior.

## CHAPTER III.

### SCULPTURE.

ARCHITECTURE can only offer to the regard a vague and imperfect symbol of the spirit itself. Subjected to the laws of weight and of inert matter, it vainly endeavors to create a clear and adequate expression for thought. Art, then, in abandoning the inorganic kingdom, passes to another, where appears with life and mind a higher truth. But the first step which it takes in this new realm is not yet the veritable return of the spirit upon itself: the reflected consciousness which it takes of its intimate nature, that which renders necessary a mode of manifestation purely immaterial, and which is reached in a greater degree by Poetry and Music, and even by Painting itself. The spirit at first seizes that only which it can express by the corporeal existence, viz., that aspect of the spiritual individuality which can be fixed in the solid matter when made immediately objective to our vision.

*Sculpture* is distinguished from Architecture in that it does not make use of the inorganic material as something foreign to the spirit, so as to make of it a simple apparel appropriate to its use. It represents, on the contrary, the spiritual being himself, having in himself his proper end, free and independ-

ent, and that in a corporeal form which is essentially fitted to his individuality. At the same time it offers to our eyes the two terms body and spirit, as forming one only and the same whole, inseparable. Notwithstanding this freedom from the limitations of Architecture, the image fashioned by Sculpture remains in essential connection with the objects which surround it. One cannot make a statue, a group, still less a bas-relief, without taking into consideration the place it is to occupy, and this requirement should be borne in mind in the primal conception.

If we compare Sculpture with Poetry and Painting, it appears at first thought that since it offers to view the human form, as animated by the soul within, it possesses the manner of expressing the spiritual principle most conformable to nature. Painting, instead of the three dimensions of space, employs only the surface, and Poetry expresses still less the corporeal, of which it transmits the notion only by artificial signs. But it is because of this simple naturalness that the mere corporeal form does not respond to the true nature of the spirit. This only reveals itself entirely by action and by speech. Poetry, with all its descriptive power, cannot give the perfection and beauty of the human face and form with precision, nor create so deep an impression of its beauty as can the plastic arts; but what it cannot, the imagination can supply, and thus it can stimulate as can no other art, and by representing man in speech and action, it can enhance and kindle and make living the imagined beauty.



Painting, too, has advantage over Sculpture, in this respect. By its use of color, of light and shade, the content of the soul can be given with greater exactitude, and its profounder and varied expression reached. But then one may ask, why may not Sculpture avail itself of these facilities, and make use of color, at least, if it cannot of light and shadow? The response is easy. The form which Sculpture represents is, it is true, but an abstracted aspect of the real living human body. But this is not an imperfection; it is but the bound which Art has imposed upon itself to remain a pure art, and to reach the highest possible excellence of its kind. Sculpture abandons color to Painting, for it cannot rival it. The pure abstract form is its aim. To add the seduction of color withdraws the attention from this, which shows best in its isolation, and only in the white light subdued of its glare. The perfect quietude of the soul, in the entire equilibrium of its internal impulses, Sculpture can give, or the modification of the same by some internal suggestion of action not yet carried to concrete reality. The collisions, the interior states of the soul, which Painting can better express, it cannot successfully portray, for it cannot give the eye in which all soul expression is concentrated.

These limitations were generally observed by the genius of the Greek Sculptors. At first, indeed, they used colors, but soon abandoned them. By degrees, as was to be expected, they reached the perfection which we acknowledge and so much admire. We

can hardly say that the use of gold and ivory was the employment of color. These combinations exhibit that Sculpture did not confine itself to the abstract simplicity of a perfectly pure art, but made concessions to a lower taste, and offered works not for their beauty merely, but that the people might enjoy the spectacle of their own wealth and power.

[We may add here that the highest taste may be somewhat doubtful of the effect even of the Athené of the Parthenon upon other than Greek eyes, work of Phidias though it was. The modern reproductions of the same have never awakened any enthusiasm.]

Sculpture forms the center of the classic Ideal. In order to know how it attains and realizes this, we have to notice (1) its *principle* (2), its *ideal*, and (3) the *materials* it employs, as well as its various *modes of representation* and the principal epochs of its *historic development*.

And first, as to its principle. Sculpture, considered in general, realizes this prodigy—that the spirit incarnates itself in matter, and so fashions it as to become present in it, and to recognize in it its own perfect image. What are the modes of the spirit susceptible of being thus represented? And how can the forms of extension be so used as to produce this effect?

The object of this Art is the spiritual individuality in its essence, in its general, universal, eternal character, lifted above inclinations, and caprices, and all transitory impressions. Hence the suggestion of

these last should be excluded from its representations. The spiritual, in its perfect and absolute independence, this existence of the spirit, not particularized, unalterable, is what we name the Divine, in opposition to the finite existence, which is developed in the midst of the accidents and hazards of the world of diversity, of contradiction, of variety and movement. Sculpture, in this relation, ought to represent the Divine in itself, in its infinite calm, and its sublimity, eternal, immovable, without subjective personality, without discord of action or situation. And when it passes to a more precise determination, to something *human* in form and character, it ought to admit here only the fixed and inevitable, and not the accidental or transitory, for the objective spirituality does not descend to this changing and fugitive particularity.

But from the very nature of the Art, its fundamental idea is not the spiritual as such, that is to say, the soul folded back upon and absorbed in itself, but the spiritual as taking consciousness of itself in another self, *i.e.*, the body. It must, therefore, limit itself to whatever only of the objective essence of the spirit can be perfectly expressed by the external form, otherwise it chooses an idea which its material cannot properly represent. In Classic Architecture the house is the fundamental type, the anatomical skeleton, had in advance, to which Art is to give form. So Sculpture finds its fundamental type in the *human* body. But the house is the production

of man, while the body is the product of nature; so the type is given, and not invented.

In nature, particularly in the animal kingdom, the ascending series of forms belongs to the parallel series of moments or developments of the *Idea*. This is what was indicated in the first part of this treatise, in the chapter on the Beautiful in Nature. It belongs to Philosophy to explain this mutual correspondence of the Idea and the corporeal form; thus to exhibit what are the particular sides of the soul itself which are realized in the form of the body, and the structure of the different organs. But the human form is not solely the body of the animal soul, but of the spiritual soul, or what we call the *spirit*. We must not confound the soul and the spirit. The soul is but the living principle which animates the body, the spirit is that which has conscience of itself, which has the reflected knowledge of its own intimate nature, of its sentiments and thoughts, of the ends to which it aspires. With this enormous difference between the animal life and the spiritual life, it may appear strange that the human body should show such an analogy with the animal form. It is that the spirit is, in man, at once both spirit and soul, since it is living. As such it ought to be clothed in a form which responds to the animal organism; but also, because of its superiority, it fashions a body for itself, in which appear the ideas and sentiments proper to it. Thus the human body is not simply a physical being. It manifests likewise the sensible and natural existence



of the spirit. It follows, that as a more elevated object it ought to be distinguished as expressing more even than its animal form, even the ideas and sentiments of a superior order.

[We may remark in passing, as an interesting point, that while this Anthropology is not exhaustive as such, and therefore may not be perfectly clear, yet here Hegel seems to reject the common notion of the Trichotomy, which regards body, soul and spirit as distinct entities, each having completeness in itself,—a strangely inconsistent and untenable notion, seeing that we know nothing of any animal body and animal soul distinct from each other; and seeing that in the human soul are all animal characteristics, with spiritual ones superadded, as by a sort of higher irradiation. Observation here confirms Hegel's psychology. Each new grade of being carries up with it what belongs to the regions below. That the new element is implicit in the old is the modern philosophy of development, which is, so far in its history, *a priori* only, seeing that in the animal merely is no evidence of spirituality, and that while there may be a hint or mute prophecy of a higher mode of existence, observation never has detected, and probably never will detect, the transition. Science by its *a posteriori* methods can never establish a theory of development. Its evidence is *a priori*, and conducts us to the acknowledgment of the unity of the absolute and underlying principle of all existence, whose essence must include the highest, not only whatever has yet been concreted, but the highest



idea of possible concretion. Philosophy and Science really are not moving apart in our day, and should be infinitely patient with each other. Neither can do without the method of the other.]

But to return to our proper subject. The human form as the expression of the spirit is given to the artist. He finds it not merely in the abstract or general, but in particular, individualized in such or such types, as serving to express one or another trait or sentiment.

The correspondence between the body and the spiritual soul, of which the Art of Sculpture avails itself, must not be confounded with that noted in physiognomy. The point of view is more limited, being the harmonious and necessary accord of the forms whence results the Beautiful, and excludes most of the particularities to which the physiognomist attaches importance. Sculpture should represent, mainly, the fixed, general, regular, inevitable in the human form, yet so individualized as not to appear only the abstract idea of it, but as revealing some special mode, or synthesis of modes, of the spirit. Whatever is so individual as to drown out the idea of the universal must be excluded. Thus, too, the merely transitory expressions of the physiognomy, the fugitive glances, smiles, etc., must be interdicted, or allowed to belong only to the lowest or bastard grade of Sculpture. As High Art it should confine itself to permanent traits, and fix them in the countenance and attitude of the body, to put thus the

two terms in perfect harmony, the general and the individual.

The first consequence drawn from these considerations is, that Sculpture, more than all the other arts, is affected by the *Ideal*. The clarity of the object which the mind conceives, and the perfect appropriation of the form to the idea, make it more than a symbolic art. Yet, on the other hand, it must never reach that degree of subjectivity when, the soul being entirely absorbed into itself, the external form becomes indifferent. The forms of the personages of Sculpture ought to spring from the imagination of the artist pure of all alien alliance, disengaged from all moral or physical accidentality. No predilection for particularities of passion or pleasure ought to betray it. On the contrary, it should seize that sort of individuality which inclines to the universal, and may be married to it. Sculpture ought to do as the gods do in their eternal domain, who create after the eternal ideas and leave to the creature the task to achieve his liberty and his personality in the real world. The theologians distinguish between what God does and what man accomplishes in his presumption and by his arbitrary will. The plastic ideal is above such questions. It occupies the middle ground between the divine felicity, and the free necessity where neither the abstraction of generality nor the arbitrariness of particularity has any more worth and significance.

This sense of the true plastic character, of the union of the human and the divine, was attained

almost only in Greece. However one may study its poets and orators, its historians or philosophers, one has not seized the central point unless one brings as the key to the explanation this point of view of the art of Sculpture. It is from this that we must consider not only the epic and dramatic heroes, but also the statesmen and philosophers. These all had, in the best days of Greece, this same plastic character, general and individual at once. They lift themselves grand and free upon the base of their strong and substantial individuality, create themselves from themselves, make of themselves what they wish to be. No one of these heroes, or thinkers, or artists, seems any less by comparison with others, so complete and statuesque is his character.

The general character of the ideal form in Sculpture is next illustrated at length. Essential to the production of the wonderful vitality and liberty of the Greek statues was the knowledge, care and industry displayed in the workmanship of the particular parts. These artists had so studied the human organization as to be able to take possession of it, whether in movement or repose, and express the same with perfect fidelity. Without doubt, the eye, when it considers these works, cannot at once clearly recognize the crowd of details which appear only when they are brought out in a certain manner, by a strong opposition of light and shadow, or which are detected only by the touch; yet though these delicate shades and minute excellencies are not discerned at once, the general impression is not lost or impaired. The

spectator has but to shift his position and he begins to perceive the subordinate beauties, the multitude of thoughts. It is this perfect keeping which produces the impression of organic fluidity of all the members. This breathing of animation, this soul in the material forms, proves that each part, though perfectly represented in itself, yet through the richness and the facility of these transitions rests in a permanent dependence not only with its neighbor but with the whole. The statue thus is animated at each point, yet the smallest details are conformed to the end; each has its distinct signification, yet finds itself upon, or grows out of, the entirety. Whatever may be the fidelity with which the forms are expressed, in the details and in the totality, Sculpture does not go so far as to copy Nature in itself, for it has to do only with the ideal form. Therefore it abandons what is purely physical, *i. e.*, that which is simply affected by the natural functions. Nor can it trouble itself with exterior accessories. In the head-dress, for example, it follows no fashion, but gives it in that arrangement which is severely beautiful. And since its function is to express the spiritual under the form of the corporeal, the corporeal form must not hide the spiritual, and, in its softness and voluptuousness, give another kind of gratification. Mere physical beauty is not the end, for this is only an exaggeration of one side of the Ideal, which overshadows the others.

The artistic methods and mechanical means by which all these excellent results are attained are



treated of at length, and in a very interesting manner. Here and there occurs a remark, which, in this condensed reproduction, we are loth to spare, *e.g.*,—the regard of the *eye* is wanting to the ideal form of Sculpture. In the early stages of the art, indeed, the eyes were colored, and, sometimes, ivory was used for them, adjusted to the remainder of the statue. But such practices were peculiar to the commencements of the art, or came from religious traditions, or were exceptions. For, after all, *color* only does not give to the eye that concentrated look in which alone is perfect expression. In the truly classic busts the pupil of the eye is lacking, or, if it is marked by a conical depression, it is merely to indicate its place, and not to rely upon it for any expression of the soul. One may think that it may have cost much to the artist thus to sacrifice the eye, in which we find so much of the inner soul of man. But the Sculptor, recognizing his as a pure Art, does not find it a sacrifice. It is not the inner depths of the soul, nor its outflow upon the exterior world, both of which expressions find their central point in the eye, but it is the form of the human body in its totality, in which at all points the soul is manifested, that is the ideal of Sculpture. And since, after all, the eye possesses not its expressiveness in itself alone, but from the positions and lines of the rest of the face, and of the entire body, the modification of these, to suit the intended expression of the eye, would be an accidental particularity which Sculpture ought to reject. Such was the fine



instinct of the great Greek Sculptors, that they firmly maintained these limits and this circumscription of their Art, and rested severely faithful to this abstraction. There are instances in ancient Sculpture where the eye does appear directed to a certain point, as in the statue of the Faun contemplating the young Bacchus,\* but it is the smile accompanying the mere inclination of the head which gives the expression. In the treatment of the *mouth*, the merely animal form, which indicates the physical cravings, is so spiritualized as to leave out of view all physical needs. But the lips need not be always firmly shut, which is rather the indication of some inner resolve or determined action. In the palmy period of the Art, the custom was rather to leave the mouth a little open, without, however, allowing the teeth to be seen; for, in the state of free concentration, the mouth naturally is slightly open. As to the position of the body, the erect attitude is needful for spirituality, yet not from its mere erectness, which may have no meaning. There must be the absence of constraint, and some indication of the spiritual interior given in the attitude. The expression of *movement* is foreign to Sculpture as a pure art. To offer for regard the divine nature in the calm of its felicity, sufficient for itself, exempt from combats, is its principal task. This excludes the multiplicity of movements. But this is not to say that Sculpture, to maintain the severity of its principle, must exclude all the *attitudes* of movement. But the parti-

\* The same is true of the Hermes recently unearthed at Olympia.

cular situation which may be thus expressed ought not to be determined to the point where it troubles or destroys the harmonious fullness which is essential to the idea, by drawing the personage into strife or collisions, or engaging him in details. It must confine itself to a simple determination, isolated, not too serious, or, at least, a mode of activity careless and serene, and whose inner calm has not been infringed by the movement indicated. As before said, the Apollo Belvidere stops just at the boundary of the permissible in this respect.

If, then, the naked form, the beauty of the body penetrated by spirit, is what best suits the ideal of Sculpture, it might be thought that *drapery* is only an obstacle. But while acknowledging that for sensible beauty preference may be accorded to the *nude*, yet let it be borne in mind that physical beauty in itself is not the supreme beauty of Sculpture. The Greeks did not make any mistake when they represented the most of their statues of *men* as *nude*, and of *women* as *clothed*. In their nude statues they would not maim the human form, and have rejected that shame which will not allow to be seen what is simply corporeal in man. This did not arise from any forgetfulness of the moral sentiment, but from indifference to desires purely sensible, and from their instinct for Beauty. But this absence of all covering cannot be admitted in an absolute manner. Many parts of the body are only capable of a simply physical beauty. For the expression of the spiritual, the nudity of these is unessential, and it is conformable

to morality to hide certain parts of the body, when the design is mainly to represent the spiritual principle. Art may cover the superfluous organs not needful for this. It is not true, then, that nudity in Sculpture gives a more elevated sentiment of the Beautiful, or indicates greater purity or innocence of manners. The Greeks exhibited in this a sense more just, more spiritual. As to the principle of drapery, the kind most advantageous for artistic execution is that which hides as little as possible the shape and attitude of the limbs. In this respect our modern dress is entirely unsuitable for Art. The beautiful organic undulations of the frame are completely lost in it. It becomes, then, a grave question what to do in the case of the statue portraits of modern times and of our own day. It seems to be an anachronism and a superficial exigency when the heroes of our own day are represented in the ideal habiliment, since their heroism is of a determinate nature, and often indicated by their dress. This denotes, indeed, a zeal for the Beautiful in Art, but a zeal badly expended. The ancients exhibited a thoughtful intelligence in all that they accomplished. That which had in itself the ideal character they represented as such. They would not borrow for anything other than it the ideal form. When the entire person of the individual is not ideal, the habiliment ought not to be so. But modern clothing presents great difficulties for the Sculptor, because it is so variable and subject to the prevalent fashion; for the philosophic sense of fashion is the right which



it exercises in that which is transitory to renew it without cessation. But in these changes what pleases us in one decade becomes ridiculous in the next. Hence, in statues there ought to be preserved only those peculiarities of dress which express the specific character of the epoch, and bear the impress of a durable type; but it is safest to find a middle way, and if possible to make the mode conform to the rules of simple beauty,—often a hard task, indeed. This difficulty is not experienced in simple busts, and, of course, may be avoided in the statues of men far removed from us in time.

But, besides the dress, there are other distinctive peculiarities which mark the individuality of personages. The beauty of the Ideal nowhere follows an abstract rule; but while essentially determined lends itself to particularities of all kinds, and thus may be added to the productions of Sculpture a living reality and a distinct physiognomy. Thus, while preserving many things in common as to their ideality, these productions are still separated for appreciation, but not by traits too rigorously marked.

The illustrations of these fine distinctions in the figures of the Greek divinities, which again are to be found elsewhere, though very interesting, we are obliged to omit; as also the discussion of the different materials used in Greek Sculpture,—iron, marble, etc.

The power to express plastic individuality,—whose expression is entirely produced by the form alone, without resort to color,—was innate with the

Greeks, and has never elsewhere been equalled. It had its principle in their religion itself. A spiritual religion can content itself with interior contemplation, and any works of Sculpture be regarded merely a luxury and superfluity; while a religion addressed to the senses, as that of the Greeks, is under necessity to produce images, and the view of such was for the people but part of their religion itself. No otherwise can we account for the incredible quantity of sculptures, these forests of statues, to be found in every town of Greece.

As before a distinction was made between Architecture independent and subordinate, so here the like distinction is introduced between Sculpture independent and subordinate, or such as serves for architectural ornamentation. Of the first kind are the isolated statues, and of the second the groups and reliefs.

The true distinction of the *Statue*, properly speaking, is to be a sacred image in the interior of a temple, where the whole environment belongs to it. If, then, such statues indicate the commencement or the end of an action, the divine repose must still not be destroyed or impaired. Of such sort are the *Venus de Medicis* and the *Apollo Belvedere*. These two were once thought the supereminent works of this Art, but modern criticism has somewhat reduced their relative excellency, and they are thought of as belonging to an epoch when the polish of execution and the aim after the gracious and agreeable had impaired the severe requirements of the Ideal.



Nevertheless, since the gods are not abstractions, the profound seriousness which is the base of their character may still admit the reflection of the real life, and of the finite existence. And we admire justly many sculptures where some charming modification of the face or form, otherwise transitory, is fixed and preserved by the Sculptor. Still more marked is this interest in the transitory in the isolated *groups*, as in the Castor and Pollux [and, we may add, in the Venus of Melos, if that be justly regarded as one of a pair]. When the Greeks would represent more complicated groups, it is never as independent in themselves, but as superadditions to Architecture. The image of the god within the temple is lifted up calm and majestic, while the front of the edifice is adorned with groups representing the special actions of the god, and which, therefore, can be executed as displaying a more animated vitality. Such was the famous group of the Niobe and her children. Here the grouping was ruled by the space intended to be filled. The Laocoön has furnished a perplexing problem to determine its origin and its destiny, whether it originated in the passage in Virgil or was derived from it, etc. We may justify, perhaps, its seeming violation of the law before given by noticing that notwithstanding the great suffering expressed with such truth, notwithstanding the convulsive shrivelling of the members and the tension of all the muscles, the nobleness and the beauty of the figures are still preserved, and that there is no grimace, even in the slightest degree,

no contortion nor dislocation. But the work belongs to a later age, which had passed by the aim after simple beauty and vitality, and affected the knowledge of the structure of the muscles and of the muscular forms of the human body, and sought to please by the charm and refinements of execution.

The ancient *relief*, whether high or low, does not go so far as painting in marking perspective by different planes; consequently it prefers figures in profile, placing them side by side upon the same surface. Hence, complex actions cannot be well represented, but such rather as are presented upon the same line — military processions, etc.

Finally, it is to be noticed that Sculpture has had an *historic development*. It gives us the most perfect expression of the Classic ideal, but it had an antecedent and a subsequent history. In the Egyptian Sculpture, notwithstanding the skill in execution, there is an absence of all internal and creative freedom, while in Greek Sculpture this is so perfect and powerful that the idea of the religious tradition is transformed into an individual and visible figure. The Egyptian gods are of a stationary and monotonous type. The Sculptors were fettered by and not allowed to transcend the prescriptions of the priests; hence there was no progress, no improvement. The artists themselves were not such from deliberate choice and native power, but were a caste in themselves. The son succeeded the father and followed his methods. The free movement of genius was impossible under such conditions. They were

workmen, for the most part, following a routine, anxious more for their salaries than for the perfection of their Art. The marked peculiarities of Egyptian Art are described by Winckelmann, and the sum of the whole critique is, that their works were devoid of all expression and spirituality. Animality was predominant, and hence, in the figures of animals, there is a display of more intelligence and an agreeable diversity. While to the human form these sculptors could give the true outline and its just proportions, they failed to express life by it. The idea itself is not perfectly seized, and hence does not find its adequate form. What is within the countenance of a work of this kind is an impenetrable mystery. Contrast the *Isis* holding *Horus* upon her knees, with the Christian representation of the Virgin and the Child. Of the Egyptian work, it has been said, "Here is neither mother nor child." There is not a trace of love, nothing that indicates a smile, or a possible kiss. This is neither goddess nor mother. It is only the sensible sign which is capable of no affection nor passion. It is not even the true representation of a real action, still less of a natural sentiment.

In the Roman Art we find the beginning of the destruction of the Classic Sculpture. The predilection for the Ideal grows less, the fondness for the mere portrait greater. However, with less purity of aim and originality of conception, the Roman Sculpture, in the circle proper to it, maintains an

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elevated rank inferior to the Greek only in these higher excellences.

As for Christian Sculpture (in what is peculiar to it, and is not a mere reproduction of the ancient works, and a borrowing of their ideas), its principle of conception is such as forbids the production of such perfect works as the Greek. All Romantic Art, as we have seen in the second part, addresses itself to the soul retired from the external world into itself, to the spiritual subjectivity concentrated in itself. [But this, when it goes out from itself again, transcends in its aspiration the Classic ideal. It is occupied with the transit toward a higher perfection, and hence its Art may give us the Sublime and the Pathetic, rather than the Beautiful; or the latter, if sought, may be given by symbol rather than in the perfect marriage of idea and form. As its aims, though less pure, are higher, some may think it (as in the case of Michael Angelo) grander in its failure than Greek Art in its success.] But Romantic Art finds Sculpture inadequate to express the complexity of its thought, containing so many new elements, and hence Painting is more adapted to its needs. Thus there is justice in characterizing Sculpture as *par excellence* the Classic Art, and Painting the Romantic Art.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ROMANTIC ARTS.

WHATEVER be their history and order of appearance, Hegel contends that Painting, Music and Poetry illustrate, as do not Architecture and Sculpture, the idea of Romantic Art. His exposition of this theme is quite abstruse, and to comprehend it it is needful to recall the thought contained in his Introduction. The condensed result of his exposition is about as follows:

In the evolution of Art, which grows in depth and compass with the human mind, we find, as has been already noticed, an increasing subjectivity, *i. e.*, the spirit comes to comprehend and be fully conscious of itself in its freedom and independence. Its first tendency, having reached this stage of its development, is to abandon the external world in order to rest upon itself and live internally; thus it ceases to regard itself as in indissoluble union with the body. The result is the separation of the principles which in the objective unity of Sculpture, in its *adytum* of repose and independence, are content with each other, and fused together. But now if these two sides, which Greek Sculpture had for the first time known how to unite, become separate, then the spirit, recoiling upon itself, not only becomes detached

from the world of nature in general, and even of all that in the soul relates to the body, but its substantial and objective nature itself is separated from the living and subjective individuality as such, so that all these movements, thus far fused together and forming a unity, detach themselves the one from the other, and become free. Art, then, ought likewise to deal with them in this freedom.

We have, then, on the one side, the world *Divine*,—God in spirit and truth, the Absolute, knowing Himself as infinite, personal, and free Spirit,—such, at least, as Art can conceive and realize; and on the other, the world temporal and *human*,—the human personality distinct from the Divine Spirit, developing itself in its proper independence, with all the particularities of the individual life, the richness of the passions and the sentiments which the human heart incloses,—a new sphere equally accessible to Art.

The point where these two sides reunite is the principle of subjectivity which is common to them. The Absolute, in consequence, appears rather as a living and real subject, and so far, at the same time, human,—in the garb of a finite personality, truly spiritual, in which resides and lives the Divine Spirit. So the new unity thus obtained does not bear any more the character of that sensible and immediate unity which Sculpture represents. It is a conciliation between the two sides which cannot be perfectly manifested but in the interior and ideal world of the soul.

As to the external side of the representation, it is equally independent in its particularity, and it acquires a right to this independence, since the principle of subjectivity does not permit this immediate accord, this perfect fusion of idea and form, which we see in Sculpture. Indeed, subjectivity is precisely the spirit existing for itself, having abandoned the real world in order to live in the world of the ideal. Though it manifests itself in the external form, it is still in such a manner as to show that this is but the external manifestation of a subject that exists entirely independent, and for itself. The solid bond, which in the Classic Sculpture united the corporeal and the spiritual, is not so far broken that there is an entire absence of relation; but it is in such wise relaxed and enfeebled that the two terms, though one may not be without the other, preserve in this correspondence their freedom face to face with each other; or, when a more intimate union has place, the spirituality is the central and luminous point. Hence the particular objects of external nature may be so dealt with as to show their participation of spirit. Thus the principle of subjectivity brings with it the necessity to abandon the natural union of the spirit with the corporeal form, and also opens a free career to the representation of the multitude of *things*. And this is not all. A new and original principle ought to assert itself likewise in the sensible material which Art is to use. Thus far, this has been the heavy matter itself in its three dimensions, as well as in the abstraction of its possible

form. Now, if the subjective principle, the soul retired within itself, is to manifest itself in this material element, it ought, on one side, to reject *space* in the entirety of its dimensions, and to transform its *real* existence into its opposite, into an *appearance* created by the spirit; and on the other side it ought to bring this appearance to view in all its particularity. Art may move without restraint in this region of the visible and the sensible, for the spirit in its freedom has returned with dominating power to the external, and it may legitimately seek to give as much as possible of the appearance of objective nature, and in such particularities as are not possible for the Art of Sculpture. It is the province of the first of the Romantic Arts, of Painting, to represent man and nature without the sensible and abstract materiality of Sculpture.

But this extended and visible *appearance* does not offer the only means of expression conformed to the principle of subjectivity. Instead of figures, which distribute themselves in *space*, it may employ *sounds*, which harmonize themselves in *time*. For sound, since it owes its ideal and momentary existence to something entirely diverse from extended matter, corresponds to the soul, which seizes itself in its subjective internality as *sentiment*. Thus, the second Art born of this principle is *Music*. This Art, in opposition to the Arts of design, rejects all form, both in the relations of thought and of the physical element which constitutes its mode of expression. But Art, to correspond to its complete idea, is called

upon to reveal not only the interior of the soul, but also the same as manifesting itself in the external world. To represent this, that is, to communicate to the spirit the thought of the spirit creating in its proper domain, Art must employ the sensible instrument of its manifestation but as a simple means of communication, and, consequently, be content with a sign in itself devoid of meaning. *Poetry*, the art of speech, responds to this view. This Art, since it alone can develop the totality of thought, is the *universal* Art, and its sweep is only arrested when the mind, in its loftiest conceptions, having only an obscure knowledge of its own thought, can no longer represent it under the symbolic forms of external nature.

[This is Hegel's endeavor to give the dialectic order of the development of the Art-impulse. It is not needful that this should have been actually its chronological sequence in the history of any people, or even in a single mind, for the transitions in either case may have been unconsciously leaped over. This is putting in words the unreflective processes, rescuing them from arbitrariness, and showing that these are the true relations in the region of abstract thinking. And surely, to appropriate this system will be an aid in the appreciation and the criticism of all the Arts.

It remains, however, still to be shown that the poetic attitude, the mode of regarding the universe, as it has been heretofore distinguished, follows in its range and amplification the order here given. It is



not wanting in the Architect or the Sculptor, but is the secret of his genius. Nevertheless, the regions of thought frequented in these Arts are more limited, obviously, than in Painting and Poetry; and hence in these Arts the coördinating principle must sink deeper in order to obtain a wider outlook. Music, too, busies itself with the ultimate mysteries, and hovers about the extreme limits of thought, carrying the imagination it knows not whither. In this regard, in the depth and purity of the poetic impulse, Music might come *after* rather than before Poetry itself. We may conceive how it may survive when the other Arts have passed away, having fulfilled their function, and its artistic perfection merge into and be identical with the absolute spontaneity of the perfect state.]

## CHAPTER V.

### PAINTING.

**T**HERE is something cold, after all, in the greatest works of Sculpture. The common mind does not linger long over them. One has to be taught to admire them so far as to linger over them. The delight requires much reflection. Painting appeals more quickly to the common heart, for it is warmer. The figure is no more, as in Sculpture, a personage immovable, and fixed on its base. It is a living being descending into our human society, and affecting a spiritual relation. In this Art, character is more pronounced. The man asserts his independence over against God, nature, and other men; displays the multiplicity of relations with the needs, interests, passions and activities of the real life. This multiplies vastly its possible subjects. Besides, Painting unites in itself what belongs to the previous Arts, the exterior enclosure which Architecture has artistically fashioned, and the forms of Sculpture. It places these in the landscape it has selected from external nature. [We may add that in dealing with the mystery of color it produces a subtle accord, allied to the harmony in Music. Even what Poetry gives, the inward thought, it vivifies by the brilliancy of the eye and the language of the features.

It presses the sense of Beauty and even of Sublimity home with more force than any other Art. It only yields to Poetry in the range and the profundity of the thought it represents. This may authorize us to think,— what Hegel elsewhere doubts,— that Painting has yet a future.]

The complete treatment of this Art requires the following division: First, its general character or fundamental idea; secondly, the particular characters suitable for its requirements, the modes of conceiving and composing them, and its methods of dealing with color; and thirdly, the different *schools* to which these characteristics have given rise,— so that this Art, like the previous ones, has an historic development. We must condense greatly the exposition of these topics.

The reason why Romantic Art, confessedly inferior to Classic in Sculpture, is manifestly superior in Painting is, that the depths of the soul, its joys, sufferings and conflicts, had come to be more completely known and acutely felt. Possessing this knowledge, Painting can do wonders with the materials it uses. By means of color it can express character, situations, and actions minutely determined. With such variety possible before it, it found only in the Romantic period subjects adequate to its material possibilities. The fundamental idea of Painting being the internal subjectivity of the spirit,— the intimate fusion of the particular and the general which characterizes the plastic Arts exists no longer. The particular is detached: the individ-

ual, even the accidental and the indifferent, resume their rights. It is as in the real world, where the accidental seems to be the predominant character of phenomena; since the spirit, retired within itself, leaves to all the objects of nature, and all the spheres of human activity, their independent existence; and yet, since it employs its activity upon this real world, it becomes possible for this Art to deal with these things with entire freedom, and allow any multitude of objects to enter its domain. The entire circle of the religious world, the scenes of nature and human life, even the most fugitive situations, find here their place. This Art may also represent sentiment, which, even when related to something objective and absolute, offers still a subjective character. What we see in the multitude of objects in the picture is the vitality of the conception, the reflex of more complex thought. So, if the intended sentiment is given, the choice of objects to convey it is indifferent, or at least allows of a wide latitude.

The physical element of painting is, space in two dimensions. Perfect concentration, and freedom from the restraints of space, consists, indeed, in the *point*, especially in the *movable point*, the fugitive instant. But Music only accomplishes this complete negation of space. Painting is still more abstract than Sculpture, but this abstraction, far from being a limitation, constitutes precisely the necessary progress which overpasses Sculpture. Already Art offers no more a simple copy of corporeal existence, but an image produced by the spirit. Hence it withdraws

from the form all the aspects which, in the common reality, do not respond to the idea it would represent. Pictures become mirrors of the soul, which reveals its spirituality by destroying the real existence, and resolving the representation into an appearance. Hence it enters into a still closer relation with the spectator than the image of the Sculptor, which preserves its independence. The spectator may shift his point of view in regarding the statue, while in painting, to catch the artist's thought, he must stir in a more limited range, or be motionless, to feel the closest *rapprochement* with the work. The requirements of proportion, etc., in the three dimensions are needless. It is a purer contemplative interest regarding the thought thus symbolized and expressed by the simple appearance.

But, in very truth and scientific accuracy, the physical element of Painting is nothing else than *Light*. It is not the heavy matter which can be verified by other senses, but something related, consciously at least, only to the sense of sight. It is the first ideality, the primitive identity in nature, and has nothing in common with the dimensions of the solid. [It is, we may add, the connecting link between the material and the spiritual, the point of transition, so that its language suits either side. It is not simple, but complex, and breaks into color on the one side, and correspondent radiance on the other. Thus the very element of painting has in itself spiritual relations, and the delight in color is something very profound. We are hovering, in its



contemplation, on the confines of two worlds, haunted by the sense of their unity, by the subtle thought that physical beauty, in the purity, richness, and infinite possibility of combinations of color married to form, is the image and physical correspondent of moral and spiritual beauty of the highest grade, and that both are needed and will be found in the perfect life.]

By this combination of clear and obscure, or rather, by the grades and degrees of light itself, does Painting construct its illusions. All color is something relatively obscure. Hence, Hegel remarks that the opinion is false which figures light as composed of divers colors; that is to say, of divers manners by which it is obscured.

[This is a question not yet put by science to perfect rest. All color is, indeed, something relatively obscure, but the obscurity alone does not explain it. The mere withdrawal of light cannot create the different colors. To account for them, optics must resort to chemistry, which brings to view a new set of relations, and carries back to a life-force not yet resolved into the mechanical. While awaiting the final *dictum* of science upon this question, we may, meanwhile, indulge in a *priori* speculation, and observe, that no concrete existence is *simple*, for observation, or even for thought, but complex, and a system of relations between elements never torn apart. *Light*, then, as the bond between the material and the spiritual, cannot be thought apart from its relations, and color is not the creation, then, of light

and its negation, but of light in relation to other elements of concrete existence. Or, if light be regarded as the pure principle, of which the physical universe is the irradiation (as the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures seem to indicate), then all color is implicit in it, and the spiritual percipient is so constructed as to be thus related to it.

With respect to the Art of Painting,—color may be regarded as filling in the outline of form already conceived and sketched by the Artist, in which case it is, by its distinctions, merely a mode of expressing form; or it may be regarded in itself, and as to its purity, richness, subtle gradations, and, when married to form, its harmony. In dealing with it in this latter respect, the Painter may be poetic, as well as in the former. In the one respect Painting resembles Music, in the mysterious charm which may be imparted by color as well as by sound. In the other, it is allied to Sculpture and Poetry, so far as that by form it gives the thought, the properly intellectual element of the picture.

When the subject is rich and complicated, the highest effects of color are not likely to be reached, or even ardently sought; the serene possession and mastery of both powers constitute the perfect artist; just as in Poetry we find fertility in thoughts and the deepest poetic regard sometimes combined with domination over language, and mastery of sweetness of sound in words, of which accord and symmetry of powers Shakespeare and Goethe are notable illustrations.]

As we have said, Painting not only concerns itself with the deep thoughts of the soul, but has open before it a free field for particularization. Hence it is at liberty to seize and fasten the transitory appearance, the minute beauty, to preserve it for more permanent and deliberate regard. We grade Painters, however, according to their propensity to choose the profound or the superficial; though the order is changed when we make skill in execution, mastery of the means, the criterion. Thus it becomes possible, in either way, that propensities may be classified and different *schools* in this Art may arise. These are determined, not so much by special ability as by individual character, and the spirit of peoples and epochs, and concern both the conceptions and modes of handling.

Although modern Painters have employed mythological subjects, yet these do not afford the highest opportunities for their Art, and, indeed, do not belong to its regular development. For the expression of profound sentiment, the ideal independence, and the kind of grandeur which characterize Classic Art, are not necessary. The natural serenity of the Greek conceptions, the joyousness, the felicity absorbed in itself, are not sufficient. To show the true depth and nature of the spirit, the soul must bring to view all its interior life,—that it has done much, enjoyed much, suffered much, striven much, and overcome obstacles, known the anguish of the heart, and the moral tortures, while at the same time retaining its integrity and keeping faithful to itself. The

ancients, indeed, in the myth of Hercules, represented a hero who, after many rude proofs, reached the rank of the Gods. But his were only physical travails. The felicity accorded him is but a silent repose; and the ancient prophesy which announced that by him should be terminated the reign of Jupiter *he* did not fulfill. The reign of this divinity and his compeers ceased only when man, in lieu of conquering dragons and serpents, conquered the dragons of his own heart, softened his severity, and humiliated the pride of his will. It is only thus that the natural serenity of the soul lapses into a higher serenity, that of the spirit, which is born out of conflict and internal torments, and which attains by effort and sacrifice the infinite peace. Holiness is a felicity conquered, and which is justified by its victory alone. If we ask what is the true idea for this sort of subjects, the reply is, it is the reconciliation of the soul with God, who, in his human manifestation, has Himself run through the path of suffering. It is, then, *religious love*, a love without passion, as for a visible and tangible object,—a love which is, in a sort, a death to nature. Anything less is transitory and imperfect. [This love, when perfected, has its correspondent in a glorified nature, in the perfect *Light*, from which the universe came, and to which it is returning.]

In the figures of the ancients we see nothing of this sort of freedom. [Theirs is rather the freedom of selfish caprice than the freedom of moral accord, which is identical with the only true and eternal

necessity.] We see only, and in the later works, when the Classic Artists have begun to suspect the absolute truth of their ideal, a sadness which is a confession of the failure of this ideal to satisfy, as eminently in the Niobe and the Laocoön. There is only a cold resignation. It is but a submission to the inevitable Fate. It is a state in which grief and nobleness of soul are not conciliated. The expression of the inner power and meaning of the human soul was given for the first time in Romantic Art.

To resume,—the true felicity in love is the abandonment, the forgetfulness of self in order to recover one's self in the object loved. [Thus, we may add, the attraction of gravitation in the physical universe is a true figure of the attraction which should reign, nay, does reign, in the spiritual realm; but as this is an attraction of free intelligences with infinite capabilities of development, it can only be realized in a *process*; so that *time* is the fundamental condition for spirit attraction as space is for physical. In the completed organism, there must, then, be the completest moral accord, to bring out the full significance and capabilities of each member. This is the ground for the attested fact of human sympathy, which, being the internal bond of the entire organism, is ineradicable.

This thesis has true rationality. Neither attraction is discovered and thought spontaneously, but is the fruit of reflection, yet either is *felt* in the depths of the soul, whether regarded as physical or spiritual. It may, therefore, be rightly called an intuit-



tion,—always existing, yet struggling and unraveling into clear consciousness and expression.]

It is this mystic or religious love, the profoundest impulse of human nature, which was the basis of Christian Painting, and enabled it to excel all other productions of this Art. The contrast of the group of Niobe with any one of the eminent groups in which Mary the Virgin figures, offers an illustration of the two ideals. Niobe has lost all her children. She keeps only her grandeur and unalterable beauty. That which is still maintained in her is the external side of existence. In this unfortunate, beauty has become her very nature and identified with her entire being, and remains all that it was,—but her internal nature, her heart, has lost the support of her love, of her life. Her individuality and her beauty can only be petrified. They give no hope nor promise. The grief of Mary has quite another character. She is not insensible. She feels the sword in her heart. Her heart is broken, but not petrified. She did not merely *possess* love: love was herself, and filled her entire soul. This religious sentiment preserves always the absolute essence of that which it loves; so the loss of the object loved does not take away the peace of love. Thus we have the living beauty of the soul in contrast with the abstract beauty of the body, which may rest unalterable in death, but exhibits no gleam of inward peace and hope.

Farthest removed from this absolute ideal is that which, taken in itself, is void of sentiment, and is *not* Divine,—*Nature*. Hence we have *Landscape*.

Yet the soul, possessed of love, can find in external nature that which is akin to itself. When this relation between the subjective soul and objective nature is established, the latter is felt to be not dead and expressionless, but living and symbolic. To exhibit this *rapport* is also the purpose of Painting, which thus pierces within the mere externality to discover and bring to view the inner thought in Nature herself. [Thus the discovery of nature's freedom is the detection of her Beauty; and the imaginative activity revelling thus in the movement of its congener is the emotion of the Beautiful].

And there is a third kind of sympathetic expression which finds in insignificant objects detached from the general landscape, and in the transitory and even trivial scenes of human life something akin to the human imagination in its play, and therefore legitimate objects for this Art. That which makes them worthy of such use is the vitality, the gaiety of untrammelled existence, possible to be felt even amid its multitude of particular interests. That which interests us in such representations is not the objects themselves; it is still the soul in its evanescent yet free phases which speaks to us. Mere illusion, the simple imitation of nature, is a lower aim, and affords occasion for the display of only technical skill. If, however, the relation between the object and ourselves is not practical, but purely contemplative, it may be an artistic aim, and such subjects should not be severely excluded, and especially those fitting phases of nature and human life which vanish as we

look on them, Painting may seize and fix for more deliberate and prolonged enjoyment.

As to the possibilities of the physical material of which Painting avails itself, we may consider, first, *Perspective*, accomplished by drawing, but principally by coloring. We are charmed, indeed, by sketches, which give the spontaneous thought of the artist in the rapturous moment of inspiration; but to make these thoughts truly living and bring out all their implications color is needed, and in addressing himself to the further task his inspiration may cool a little, and the completed work in one aspect of truth be less vivid than the primal sketch. [And besides, the fondness for the charm of color may be so great as to lead the artist so far to indulge in its possibilities as to conceal the vigor of the pure thought. To attain the most perfect adaptation to each other of the two can alone entitle the picture to be called absolutely perfect.]

The subject of color, and of the methods of dealing with light and shadow, is treated *in extenso*, and cannot be abridged. We pass on to the differences in the modes of *conception*, of *composition*, and *characterization*.

The modes of *conception* have their origin in part in the subject to be represented, and in part in the degree of development of the Art. The first form to be noticed is that in which Painting shows its analogy with Sculpture and Architecture. This is the case when the artist confines himself to isolated figures, which are represented, not in the living deter-

mination of a situation variable in itself, but in simple repose. The religious personages are capable of an expression such as to constitute an object of veneration and love for the faithful. If this be wanting, and they are merely statuesque, Painting shows its inferiority. Such are even interesting only to those acquainted with the originals. Painting, to exhibit its superiority, must give the figure in a determined situation, and this, for the most part, requires an environment. Some sort of dramatic movement is needed even to bring out perfectly the individuality of single figures. In this variety of combinations Painting shows its analogy with Music. This necessitates *Composition*.

Not every situation is suitable for this Art, yet the painter has a field almost unlimited; and here Painting shows its analogy with Poetry. It cannot, however, give the development of a situation, as can Poetry or Music, in a succession of different states, but in a single moment. Thus it should seize that instant in which what precedes and what follows are concentrated in a unique point. The advantage which it has over Poetry is, that it can give us the scene determined in all its details. Descriptive Poetry in this regard is inferior, since it gives only successively what Painting gives simultaneously. In reading we forget what precedes, and do not know what is to follow. The whole impression is confused, and we have to make a mental picture, which is far feeble than that given by Painting.

But in another relation, in what may be called the



lyric relation, Painting yields to Poetry and Music, for these Arts can express ideas or sentiments, not only as such, but in their fluctuation, their development, and their gradation; and the intensity and concentration of sentiment can be given by Music alone. Painting, here, has at its disposition but the expression of the countenance, and the attitudes of the body, which can give an expression only in its manifestation in a specific action. If it attempts to express this internal sentiment immediately, without precise motive and without action, its work is dry and insipid.

If, then, Painting is to represent a veritable situation, its first law is intelligibility. Well-known religious and historical subjects have here the advantage: any others find fewer spectators. Allegorical representations are always in doubtful taste. The figures are known to be unreal, and inspire no strong interest. But the determined situation being recognizable, the task of the painter is to put in relief the different *motives* which the situation incloses. Each action of which the moral spring is to reveal itself externally offers striking signs, manifest consequences, and sensible relations, which may be so given as to make the whole comprehensible, and bring out the existing content of each individual soul. And since the Artist has large spaces to fill, and has need of a landscape or its equivalent as the basis of his picture, and of the effects of light and of accessory figures, he should adapt, as far as possible, all this environment to the motives of the situ-



ation itself, that it may not be insignificant, but help to combine all the elements into an harmonious whole. Hence the skill needed for *grouping*, in which the favorite form with painters has been the architectonic, the pyramidal, which has unity in itself. If a mode of grouping less symmetrical is adopted, and therefore more real and living, care should be taken that the figures are not huddled together, as in some pictures, where one cannot tell to what bodies the limbs belong, and which thus puzzle the attention and impair the enjoyment.

In *characterization* Painting has greatly the advantage over Sculpture. Many figures of ancient Art are statuesque, and can hardly be called characters, are rather eternal types of the plastic ideal; while Painting does not lift its characters to this degree of ideality. It is not even needful for it to seek such perfection of the physical form, since it is no longer this, but the inner content of the soul, that is the centre of the representation. Thus the moral consciousness may show itself in the homely figures of Socrates or Silenus, and the painter may, by the inner beauty of the soul, glorify the ungainly body.

Thus portraiture is a legitimate field for Painting; but here the inner character, and not the mere physical conformation, should be the chief aim of the Artist. A portrait may have a strong resemblance, yet be insignificant. A mere sketch from the hand of the master, indicating what there is in the character to admire and love, or fear, may have far more *worth*. To preserve the middle pathway between

the two tendencies is the secret of the Art of Portraiture. Titian, Albert Dürer and others have made portraits of which it may be said that the picture is more like the real person than whatever can be drawn from his countenance at any one time. The design of the portrait is the countenance fashioned by the spirit. Thus it is not only allowable, but necessary, to *flatter*. The simple accidents of the visage may be neglected in order to bring one into closer contact with this soul.

In giving the historic development of Painting, Hegel's facts and judgments do not differ materially from those found and easily accessible in numerous books concerning this Art. We only note what he says of the peculiarities of Dutch Painting. These he ascribes to national causes. The emancipation from external constraint which the religious Reformation and the victories which secured their independence produced, enabled these people to give themselves with more freedom and joy to domestic pleasures. Having a natural propensity toward Art, they would enjoy a second time in their pictures this honest, complacent and merry existence. In painting from the real life, the Dutch artists have excelled all others. We note in their works the perfect mastery of the topic, a wonderful tact in dealing with accessories, and a perfect care in execution. There is not before us, in the paintings of Teniers and others, a mere vulgar sentiment, but the moral or domestic life, approaching the free life of nature, with its animal gaiety and comicality. These figures

are not those of men really bad and contemptible. In more modern pictures of this kind there is often found an immoral element at the base of the comicality. In the Dutch pictures there is a truly poetic element. [The spontaneous joy of the perfect life is figured in this lower sphere, and men are like the birds, singing they know not why.]

## CHAPTER VI.

### MUSIC.

HEGEL now goes over again the sequence in the development of the Art-impulse, in order to give the proper ground for the Art of Music.

If the spirit will manifest itself in the character of internal concentration, the physical element which is to respond to this need should enable a mode of expression which, in its sensible form, has nothing extended nor fixed. There is no space nor fixedness in the human consciousness. We need now, signs, materials, and a mode of expression, whose character shall be to vanish as soon as they are born. This entire disappearance of all extent, this complete absorption of the soul into itself, is accomplished in the second of the Romantic Arts, in *Music*. Instead of leaving the sensible element, by which the interior feeling is to be expressed, to be developed for itself, as do the figurative Arts, instead of giving it a position and permanent form, Music annihilates this form. Nevertheless, it retains something which attaches it to the figurative Arts, and which recalls that they have preceded it, for it has to move in the very bosom of the matter of which it is the negation. We have now that which, as to the material, has rested in repose,—*movement*. Paint-

ing suppresses one dimension of space; Sculpture reduces extent to form. The destruction of extent will, then, consist in this,—that a determined body, abandoning its repose, is drawn into movement, and meanwhile vibrates so that each part of the body maintained by cohesion, in being displaced, tends to return to its anterior state. The result of this undulatory vibration is *sound*, the material element of Music. Hearing, to which this is addressed, is a sense more intellectual, more spiritual than sight. The regard which contemplates without desire, works of Art, leaves its objects, indeed, such as they are, without destroying or harming them, but that which it seizes is not, after all, anything purely ideal, but, on the contrary, images which preserve their sensible existence; while the ear, without exacting the least alteration of the body, penetrates to the result of the vibration, and thereby the soul experiences an ideal animation. Sound, like the vibration which produces it, is a double negation,—a phenomenon which is destroyed as soon as it is born. It is thus eminently fitted to be the echo of the soul. It is immaterial, aloof from space, and, in its vanishing, almost aloof from time. Thus it has an entirely abstract character. It does not, and cannot, like the stone, or the color, represent the real existence of anything. The most abstract subjectivity only is appropriate for musical expression. It is the *Ego* in its simplicity, the person with no other content than itself; out of relation with space and its objects, and finding in the element of sound a



language for feeling, not caused by thought, but pure, yet able to suggest thought. This fugitive sound has no proper duration in itself. It is but a means of transmission, and borrows all its worth from the sentiment to which it is addressed.

[There is need here, also, to distinguish mere *agreeableness* of sound, which has an immediately physiological explanation, and which other animals share with us, from the beauty which can be given to sound, which thus is addressed to the imagination as well. Thus, in the concrete, the delight in it is double, both sensuous and spiritual; and in estimating music, separation should be made of these two, which is not ordinarily done, as most express their relative estimation from the whole impression, and do not abstract the spiritual and artistic element only, as furnishing the criterion for their judgment.]

Music, though opposed to Architecture, has a close analogy with it; for, like it, its mode of expression is symbolic, and not, as in Sculpture and Painting, a more or less perfect unity of idea and form. Moreover, neither Art borrows its forms from nature, but invents them, draws them from imagination, to fashion them according to the laws of symmetry or of rhythm. Each deals with number and quantity. Music is entirely bound by these laws. This Art may even renounce its immediate object, to express sentiment, and build up an edifice of sound, arousing only admiration for the builder's skill.

There is little analogy with Sculpture, in the objective element, or in the idea; while with Paint-

ing there is more affinity, for in expressing sentiment Painting ventures into the domain of Music. The Painter, however, fashions his subject exteriorly, while the other Artist buries himself in the depths of his feeling; and in certain musical compositions this absorption goes so far that the subject itself is forgotten, and he abandons himself to spontaneous and playful expression. If the contemplation of the beautiful in general effects a certain *deliverance* of the soul from the needs and miseries of finite existence, Music surely carries this emancipation to the highest degree.

In a work of Sculpture or of Painting, the unity, as we have seen, must by all means be preserved and felt, and for this deep thought and infinite painstaking are required. Music, too, must have its unity, but in a sense more restrained. In a musical theme, the sense to be expressed is quickly exhausted. If it is repeated, even with variations and extensions, these at last become superfluous and wearisome. This multiplicity of harmonic differences is not exacted by the subject nor sustained by it. Yet in a musical composition one theme may be added to another, mingle with it, interchange with it, so that each may appear in turn vanquished or victorious. Thus the unity of the composition is not, as in the other two Arts, profound and concentrated. It is larger and freer. It is a succession, a flight, and a return. The Art of Music, moving in the free world of the soul, has the right to put itself above the given subject [and to melt away the

thought it has consented to express, or accompany, and dissipate it into the vapor of feeling]. Yet Music is free, also, to limit itself rigidly, and to give us a morsel of finished and completely organized sound.

Music has a still greater affinity with Poetry, since both deal with the sensible element of sound; yet for all this strong resemblance, the difference is more marked than with any other of the Arts. In Poetry, sound is not modulated and artistically fashioned. It is reduced to a simple oral sign to which meaning has been arbitrarily attached. But it does not identify itself with this. If sensation and thought become an object for the mind, it is not that they are expressed by signs or words. These are an aid and convenience, but not essential. Sound being thus indifferent in itself to the ideas which it has been arbitrarily made to transmit, may be given an independence, and treated as pure sound. In Painting, it is true, colors, and their distribution as simple colors, have in themselves no proper signification, and thus this, too, is a sensible element independent of thought. But color alone cannot make a picture. It must be supplemented by form and expression. But all this combination falls short of the power of language to express ideas. Sound is, then, in Poetry a means to an end, while in Music it is the end itself. In modern times, especially, Music has become more independent of all clear and determinate thought, and confined to its proper element; yet it often happens that the

complicated fabrics it constructs can be enjoyed only by *connoisseurs*, and produce but a feeble interest for the common heart.

That which Poetry loses in exterior objectivity, by neglecting this element of sound, it regains in interior objectivity by the reality of the pictures its language offers to the imagination, while Music attempts nothing like this. Any mental pictures it may arouse are always vague and flitting. [It does not *bind* and absorb the imagination, but beckons it onward, and leaves it free.] Yet, as we have seen, it does not and need not preserve this entire independence from thought, since it may adjust itself to a determinate theme, to a subject already treated by Poetry. However, the musical side of such a work should remain predominant, and the purely poetic side not appear of equal worth. The words should be merely the occasion for a musical commentary, which should still appear independent, and as the true work.

[In what goes before Hegel seems to disdain the sensuous element of Poetry. While, indeed, its uttered sound is less *agreeable* to the sensory than musical sound, yet it is capable of treatment in and for itself, and the ability so to treat it as to produce the highest excellence in this respect, and the correspondent capacity to enjoy it to the uttermost, are rare natural gifts. Only in the greatest Poets do we find the intensest and most piercing outlook upon the universe allied to this feeling for melody and harmony of sound, and mastery of its possibilities. The



neglect of this thought on Hegel's part is the result of over-systematization.]

Music differs from the other Arts in its mode of conception, whether it serves to accompany a text or remains independent. A musical composition may, indeed, be nothing more than a succession of combinations, modulations, oppositions and harmonies, but then it remains empty and inexpressive, and is mechanism rather than Art. This requires that some sentiment, some vague thought, some imaginative activity should inspire the Artist. [Music does not deal with precise thought, though it consents to use it as a guiding-thread. This thought it is perpetually plunging into the bath of feeling, dissipating it into its primal elements, the deep longings and aspirations of the human heart, to utter which in its proper material is its true aim.]

Sentiment in its generality comprises divers particular states of the soul, and its sphere is large. But whatever these may be, they are separated from exterior relations and made as pure as possible. Like the song of the bird, music should be, or seem to be, a spontaneous production in which the technical labor is concealed. Natural interjections are not indicated. These are as much artificial signs as language, and manifest some moral situation, an impression which exhales with the cry and relieves the soul by some change or shock in the organization. Music, on the contrary, expresses feeling by measured sounds and cadences, softening and tempering the natural violence of expression. In the other



Arts, the soul and its objects still remain, in one sense, aloof. In Music, the object is the condition of the soul itself. [It moves the soul as does no other Art, because it searches into it more deeply, dealing with the relations which escape intelligence, expressing the soul's want of knowledge of its own need, thus stifling, or rather allaying and beautifying, its inmost cry. The delight in Music, as we have before observed, is complex: the purely sensible one, enjoying the *timbre* of the sound itself; the purely intellectual one, in which the mind, with an interest entirely rational, follows the harmonious and melodious concourse of sounds, understanding them, and having recognition of the triumphant skill of the composer; and the purely imaginative one, in which this faculty, joyous or sad, yet ever free, endeavors to follow and sometimes to supply concrete images to this flow of suggestions. The invisible ghosts of thoughts rise into its atmosphere, and become many-shaped and many-colored, yet vanish on the instant, before the seducing attraction of the melody which carries it along wonderingly into newer realms.]

Thus, in Music, it is not so much our whole complex being that is taken hold of, as our simple Ego, the centre of our spiritual existence which is put in movement, [and when this is done our whole being sometimes responds, and trembles with it]. Thus, in musical fragments easy to follow, and in which the rhythm is strongly marked, we feel the impulse to mark ourselves the measure, or to mingle our own

voice with the melody. In the dance, the music passes in some way into the limbs. When music accompanies the military march, it sustains the soldier by its regularity, and relieves the monotony of the tread, in filling the soul with harmony. Thus is revealed the intimate relation between the internal sentiment and the measure of time, which constitutes the abstract element of Music. Feeling excludes the idea of extent, and time is the negation of extent. There is a continuous identity in the soul itself, which is truly imaged, not by the changes of determinate thought, but by abstract time, which is capable of measure pure in itself. This is the basis of Music, which is, still, more than measure. Since musical sounds have no objective permanence, but disappear and vanish in infinite succession, the Art has need of prolongation of sound, or rather of reproduction renewed without cessation; and the key to govern this is found when music takes the form of a communication made by a living person. If soul is to reach soul, the human voice is the most perfect organ, though instruments may accomplish in lesser degree the same result. But the personality of the performer may be made too exclusive, and the interest concentrated upon his skill or the fineness of his voice.

How, then, does this Art add to simple sound an artistic expression? Each sound has an existence independent and complete in itself. It has no need to be coördinated and combined with other sounds. Hence its power to express sentiment is very limited.

It may have musical worth from its sweetness and purity, but it is by its relation to other sounds that character is given to it. These relations are imparted by the mind which carries into this element its own categories. Hence the necessity of *quantity*. The relations of *number* are employed in a manner invented by Art, and modified and graded by it with the greatest variety. Equality and inequality and the abstract laws of quantity are the basis of Music, in which respect it has affinity with Architecture. Thus, on one side it is the freest of all the Arts; on the other, the most closely bound. It does not put these two sides in contrast, but harmonizes and unifies them. [Thus of all the Arts it furnishes the completest image of the perfect life, of *liberty in law*, the coalescence of freedom and necessity.] It has, then, to combine the abstract time and the free soul. Hence we have to note, (1) the simple duration, the temporal movement which Art cannot abandon to arbitrariness, which it determines after fixed measures; these last admitting of differences, which in their turn have to be reduced to unity. Thus the need of *measure, cadence and rhythm*.

But (2) Music deals not only thus with abstract time, but with determinate sounds, whose difference depends upon the *quality* of the sonorous vibrations, and also upon the different number of vibrations which the material can produce in an equal time. These differences become essential for the combination and opposition of sounds and their conciliation. This task is denominated *Harmony*.

(3) It is by *Melody* that upon this basis of the cadence, animated by the rhythmic movement and the harmonic differences, sounds are lifted into the sphere of expression spiritually free.

Music can only distinguish sound by measure into which abstract time can be broken. Thus it creates differences, separates parts of an homogeneous element by means of the principle of regularity. The reason why Music has need of measure is, that the exterior movement of time has to be treated conformably with the nature of the interior soul itself. The Ego is not a continuity undetermined, duration without fixedness. It has true identity only inasmuch as it assembles the scattered moments of its existence, and returns upon itself. The undetermined moments of time in succession have given to them, by being thus divided and measured, the character which belongs to these same movements in the soul itself. In conformity with this principle, the duration of sound no longer loses itself in the indeterminate. It has a fixed commencement and a fixed end. But if many sounds are to succeed each other, and if each one in itself has a different duration from the others, in the stead of the first empty indetermination there is introduced afresh an arbitrary multiplicity, equally undetermined, of particular quantities. But this disorderly confusion contradicts still more the unity of the Ego than the simple uniformity of a continued succession. The soul cannot discover and satisfy itself in this variety, except as the isolated

intervals of time are reduced to unity. And this unity itself, in order to arrange its particularities under its law must be a *determinate* unity. This more advanced regularization is realized in the *Cadence*, which maintains a determined unity of time as the rule to mark the intervals, and also fixes the arbitrary duration of particular sounds, which thenceforth are reduced to a fixed unity; and this measure of time is renewed in a manner mathematically uniform. In this co-ordination of an arbitrary multiplicity the Ego recognizes the image of its own proper unity, and the return of the same unity reminds it that it is itself which has accomplished it. The pleasure which it experiences by the cadence in the return measure is more complete than that derived from any uniformity of times or of sounds in themselves, since it is something belonging to itself, for it has given to time this unity and uniformity for its own proper satisfaction.

In the physical world this abstract identity is never found. There are no two things and no two movements precisely alike. A propelled or falling body is retarded or accelerated in an infinite progression. The celestial bodies have no proper uniformity in size or movement. No movement of the animal body is ever exactly repeated. In the *Cadence* alone we find pure abstract identity.

But in order that this determined unity may be felt by the soul, the presence of an unrestrained element, which lacks uniformity, is necessary. There must be irregularity in order that the regu-



larity may be felt. The contrasts and variety which give liberty in law to Music are accomplished by *Rhythm*, which is a system of accentuation. Poetry, too, has its rhythm, but when the two Arts are married, it is by no means necessary that the accents of the measure should be directly opposed to those of the metre. Coalescence is allowable and desirable, but need not be exact. The rhythm of the cadence with its strictly regular return must be distinguished from the more animated rhythm of *Melody*. The diverse periods of melody have no need to commence strictly at the same time with the cadence, and to finish when the other finishes. This is a freer movement, and they may separate just at the point where the principal *cesura* of the melody falls in that part of the cadence to which, in the relations of ordinary rhythm, no such elevation belongs; while, on the other hand, a sound which in the natural movement of the melody ought to have no marked elevation may find itself in that part of the cadence which exacts a *cesura*.

The means by which Music, thus resting upon the abstract base of measure and rhythm, may develop itself freely, is to be found in the domain of sounds considered in themselves. These lead us to the laws of *Harmony*, by which differences in sounds are conciliated.

The means to furnish the sounds are not at hand except in the human voice. Hence the different instruments. But the voice is an ideal synthesis of the sounds disseminated in all other instruments,

and hence is the primal and immediate instrument of the soul. But human skill may abstract this or that possibility of the voice, and intensify it by the sound of a particular instrument. To put these in accord is a great Art.

Besides this physical quality of the sound, it may have given to it a determinate character by its relation to other sounds. The modes of accomplishing this are treated at length, and are so scientific and technical as to find place only in a proper treatise on Music.

Thus far these constitute the basis upon which the soul is freely to move. The free and poetic element is *Melody*. This, though submitting to these necessary conditions, does not yield its liberty. By these very conditions, which forbid it from mere arbitrariness, it acquires its true independence. These laws are what make freedom in any high sense possible. These abstractions are the means by which melody displays its richness of meaning and its spiritual quality. It may even break these accords into dissonances, and evoke contradictions, unchaining all the potencies of harmony, sure of its power to appease their combat, and celebrate its own peaceable triumph. But if this hardihood becomes the chief aim, then the composition may have merely a technical interest.

There may be different means to accomplish the expression of sentiment, whether superficial and spontaneous, or profound and meditative. It may be a simple *accompaniment*, that is, when the thought

expressed in words is seized in its abstract sense, or on its sentimental side, and allowed to penetrate the musical movement; or it may detach itself from any text and *pose* independently. The true sense of accompaniment is not that of dependence upon the words. Rather the reverse. It is the text which is at the service of the music, and it has no other worth than to create for the mind a representation more precise, and to supply a guiding-thread. Music still preserves its liberty, and conceives its subject not altogether in the sense of the text, for it may seize its ideal signification and wander through its implications. It is not meant here only that the instrument furnishes an accompaniment to the voice, rather that the voice itself is an accompaniment, since it adds a mode of expression to the sense of the words.

In "dependent Music," the text, which gives precise thoughts and images, serves to withdraw the mind from its state of aimless reverie. But the impression is weakened if this bondage to the subject is too apparent. The greatest composers have avoided either extreme, and transmute the thoughts of their subject into a free movement, though they add nothing to the words [except the outflow of the feeling involved in them, thus giving imagination its own free field.]

In pure Music, it is the soul which sings immediately on its own account, to manifest its inward joy or its dreamy feeling; but this, like every other Art, has for its mission to realize the Beautiful, and

hence it has still another function,—to moderate these very affections of the soul and their expression, so that they shall not be a disordered and tumultuous crowd of passions. In the transports of joy, as in the depths of grief, the soul must rest free and happy in the overflowings of the melody, if the requirements of Beauty are to be met. It is the part of Music to lift it above the constraint of any such absorption to a plane where it can take refuge without obstacle in the pure feeling of its own free self. Not the particular sentiment, but the interior movement of the soul itself, is the dominating thing. As the skylark, which balances itself in the air, sings in order to sing, serenely, tranquilly, in the intoxication of spontaneous production; so the human song and the melody of expression in Music have no other end than themselves.

Yet this Art, in its compass, cannot content itself solely with this melodic element. [The soul may become weary of this elevation, and need to descend in order to receive strength to ascend again. Therefore the guiding limitations of a precise subject become an aid and not a hindrance to the Art. In the text are suggestions which furnish this relief and stimulus. Music may thus seize some particular sentiment implicit in the text, amplify and vary the expression, give it imaginative treatment, live in it, and use it so as for a time to transcend it, may even return to it, and repeat it, carrying the glad and willing soul into its fascinations again ere it lapses suddenly or by easy transitions into a new melody.]

The *Recitative*, or chanted declamation, is allowable, when a mere peaceable recitation of events is required, or even for pathetic descriptions. This, and the dramatic chant, while hardly music, are yet needed for the complete artistic work.

The nature of the text is not a thing indifferent. The greatest compositions have always had an excellent text. Its thought must have worth, for all the skill possible can never draw out of an insignificant thought anything musically profound, though in musical morsels, simply melodic, the words are, in general, of little importance. [It is possible for the listener to neglect them altogether, and regard the performance as pure music, though many persons, being so accustomed to associate articulation with the human voice, when it becomes a mere instrument, or sings in foreign language, find their gratification disturbed.] The greatest masters have loved best pure sounds, and in combining them have given us their wonderful symphonies. Yet in making these purely musical structures they have not gone so far as to produce what is meaningless and exacts no reflection, suggests no pathways for imagination. The thought, though indeterminate, is real,—[profound, not by its precision, but by its rudimental character. In penetrating to the region whence the elements of all thought have their origin, and symbolizing by all the resources of sound, human longings, and the freedom, fertility, wide range, and infinite possibilities of the perfect life, Music is the soli-



tary Art, may be thought to be the greatest, and is certainly the only enduring one.]

In musical *execution*, there may be the exact literal rendering of the thought of the composer, and the never transcending it; or there may be an effort not only to reproduce but to *create* the expression. In some subjects the reproduction should be faithful. Only the genius in execution knows when to add anything. The soul in the musical performance may become as completely rapt as in musical composition, and if so, new suggestions in expression are possible. It is here as in the Histrionic Art,—one may forget all other things in the sense of the dramatic situation, and the true Artist may reveal here his talent in invention, the depth of his sensibility as well as the superiority of his execution. This vitality is the more marvellous, if the organ is not the human voice, but some other instrument. Here sounds, in themselves wanting in life, have imparted to them soul and expression. [The violin, in especial, may become almost an extension of the muscular and nervous systems, of the brain, and of the soul itself.]

## CHAPTER VII.

### POETRY.

POETRY is the Art which unites the two modes of expression. Like Music, it contains the immediate perception by the soul of itself. Like the figurative Arts, it develops itself distinctly in the world of imagination, and creates determinate objects like those of Sculpture and Painting. And it alone is capable of expressing an event in all its parts, the succession of thoughts, the development and conflict of passions, and the complete course of an action. It is reckoned, however, among the Romantic Arts, because, first,—in virtue of its character of spirituality, it is freed from all contact with matter. It expresses spirit immediately to spirit. (It not only embraces the world of thought in its totality, but describes all the particularities and details of external existence with a fertility unattainable by Music or Painting.) Secondly, it is distinguished by its universality. It does not, like Painting, give us precise forms simultaneously perceived, but offers them in succession, and to the imagination only. It gives what Painting can only faintly suggest, the before and after. This is akin to the nature of the soul itself, which is manifested in a similar set of changes. Thirdly, it not only

abandons the sensible forms of the figurative Arts, but even that of which Music avails itself, the sound itself. We have left for its objective element simply the internal representation, the images aroused to life by the arbitrary signs of language. Thought need not be confounded with language, which is only *medium*. Thus it is indifferent for Poetry, whether it be read or recited. It can be without essential alteration translated into a foreign language, and even from verse into prose, and the relations of sounds be thus totally changed. What it has to represent by this material is the True in itself, and whatever interests and moves the spirit. But its unlimited material is not poetic simply by being seized by the imagination, for the common thinking does this. It must be seized, rather, by the artistic imagination. This mode of activity is something quite other. (1) The subject is not conceived under the form of rational or speculative thought, nor under that of sentiment inexpressible by words, nor with the precision of sensible objects. (2) The subject in entering into the domain of the artistic imagination puts off whatever particularities and accidents may destroy its unity, rejects all surplusage, and appears as an organic whole, which, though having the look of close relation between the parts, is yet free from that kind of mutual dependence which characterizes the prosaic reality. Its unity is entirely ideal.

[Some critical scrutiny of what is said above is needed to reconcile it with ordinary thinking, or

to make clear the difference. First, let us note that Hegel distinguishes the *vulgar* from the *artistic* imagination. The mere mental reproduction of familiar objects, or construction of arbitrary combinations, so as to form a new totality, possible or impossible to be realized (which, indeed, is the habitual state of the ordinary consciousness, furnishing entertainment for the mind, and sometimes stimulus to exertion), is what is commonly meant by this word. Some authors have preferred to call it *fancy*, reserving the other term for another use. It is an arbitrary dealing with the material supplied by memory. The poetic manner of dealing with this same material involves a new kind of activity, the impartation to this aggregation of the soul's own unity, thus organizing it and giving it objective unity. In this we have a completer fusion of the subjective and objective elements, in which the soul thus determined becomes its own object. The vulgar or arbitrary movement, which may be called fancy, grades into this insensibly, and the two cannot, in the concrete, be clearly separable for thought. But this last is not yet the artistic or constructive imagination. It antedates it. Because this has become the habitual mental attitude it is that the artistic impulse has birth. When nature supplies the technical ability to deal with form or color or sound, or it is by labor acquired, then this impulse finds expression, and we have the Sculptor, the Painter, or the Artist of Music. Otherwise the Artist remains inchoate, shut in from external expression. The poet, too, as we

have declared above, must have ability to deal with *sound*. Doubtless most will object to Hegel's *dictum*, that poetry can be translated into a foreign language or into prose without essential alteration. Who has not felt that by this process the Beauty, the Poetic soul, is sometimes completely lost? Indeed, Poetry cannot dispense with sound, the body of the arbitrary sign, the word; and it is only a perfect Art when it comprises it, and brings out all its wondrous possibilities of delight, entirely distinguished from musical delight. The thought is itself rendered determinate by the sounded word, which gives it subtle relations. Poetry is not, then, a purely spiritual Art, but only so in the sense in which Music is. Indeed, the purely spiritual exists only in the abstract, and cannot come within the activities of imagination. These are never freed from the sensible world. The human spirit, as such, is not pure spirit. It is a spiritual *soul*. Hence it *exists* only as determined by the physical relations. Thought owes its being to these determinations. All existence is, then, for the imagination a concrete synthesis, and is at the same time ideal and real, and withal emotional, for the consciousness which apprehends it is never destitute of feeling. And we can think the Divine spirit only as complacent over his own works.

It is a vantage to poetry to deal with *sound*. Hereby it does as Music does, descends into the depths of absolute existence, or rather dwells upon the border-land between the primitive and ultimate worlds with which Music deals, and the intermediate



and actual one in which the other Arts have their home, sometimes taking its free flight, and its mysterious wanderings into one realm, and oftener moving among the precise images and in the movements of the other. As a mode of expression it is only perfect when its two capacities for imaginative reproduction and combination, and for sweet and harmonized sound, are perfectly married, and in the resultant charming of the listening soul there is at the same time the triumphant mastery of the thought, and the bewildering sense of the presence of mystery, of meaning beneath all clear consciousness.

Both speculative and poetic thinking, as we have said, coördinate, and demand unity; but the one deals with ideas and relations, the other with the concrete manifestations of the same, and *feels* as the first does not, the correspondence of *all* the elements of absolute being, and thus makes a completer synthesis, which appeals not to the cool reason only, but to the entire sum of the soul's activities.]

From all this it follows that not every so-called poem, *i. e.*, system of measured words, is a Poetic work, for it may be a piece of pure mechanism. (The true poem is rather the result of a special mode of thinking, in which consists its inspiration. This mode is largely disseminated, and there have been many Poets who, for divers repressing reasons, have never produced poems.

Poetry is more ancient than artistically fashioned prose. It is the first form under which the mind seized the *True*. It is a mode of knowledge in which

the *general* aspect of things is not yet separated from their *individual* existence, in which are not yet made distinct the *law* and the *phenomenon*, the end and the means, to be afterward connected by the processes of reasoning. In this manner of conception it represents its objects as forming each a whole complete in itself, and so far independent, [yet these obviously form a totality, of which the poetic mind seeks to find the unifying principle. The rational laws which govern it are not sought in their abstract form; rather there is *divined* the hidden soul of the apparent complexity. When a glimpse of this is reached the poet utters his discovery]. The poetic regard has commenced when man undertakes to express *himself*. That which is expressed is there in order to be uniquely expressed. If man in the midst of action and danger so elevates as to possess and contemplate himself, there escapes from his lips a poetic expression. The primitive poetry is something spontaneous, and is poetic without being known as such, and is so by the thought rather than by the language. The later poetry has learned the resources of language, and is a more deliberate work. In the primitive ages, when the conception of the universe, determined by the religious belief or by some other principle has not been yet developed into a knowledge rationally systematic, when the actions of human life are not yet regulated by abstract maxims, Poetry has easy play. Prose, then, does not constitute in opposition to it an independent domain, and an obstacle which it has to surmount. If the prosaic

mode of conception appears in all the objects of human intelligence, and has left its imprint everywhere, Poetry has to recast these elements, and restore to them its own original mark. In its struggle with the prosaic it has a difficult task, and to vindicate its own right and truth in the face of the common disdain.

Since its sphere is so wide, and since it appears among peoples differing greatly in physical and mental habitudes, there arise different forms of Poetry; and different epochs, too, favor particular directions for this Art. Thus at some times and places men are more poetic than at others. Oriental thought has been more poetic than Occidental, Greece being excepted. The unity of the universe, its principle and indissoluble bond, is the chief thought in all the productions of Oriental genius. The West, on the contrary, especially in modern times, proceeds by unlimited division and infinite particularization. In this reduction of the world to atoms, each part, in its isolation, appears independent,—which forces us to reattach it to others by the relations of dependence. Among the Orientals, nothing rests, properly speaking, independent. Objects appear but as accidents which concentrate and absorb themselves continually in the One and Absolute Being from which all things proceed, and to which they return.

But from this variety of national forms and developments there is detached in some manner, in the course of ages, their common essence, that which can be comprehended and enjoyed by other nations and

other ages. This, the permanent and essential human nature, becomes the artistic element. The Greek poetry, in particular, has been admired and imitated by nations the most diverse, because in it the aspect of human nature in its purity, both in its idea and its form, has attained the most perfect development. But it is proof of the largeness of modern culture that it does not find Indian poetry entirely foreign, but becomes more and more in sympathy with this unique development of human nature.

It is obvious that the unity required for a poetic work implies the organic connection of its parts. But it is not so obvious that each part must have distinctness and be fit for regard in itself. Reason is satisfied when in the philosophic movement it reaches the ultimate and coördinating principle; but imagination is not so satisfied. [It loves to disport among the ramifications and claims to comprehend them.] Hence this Art seeks to make every element of the entirety interesting and living in itself. The poetic exposition is therefore slower in its movement than the logical. But this tendency may run into excess, and the attention be diverted by too much minuteness of detail from the unifying idea, and its spiritual significance. And besides, the unifying bond is not any abstract relation of end and means, but concrete, and admits of a fertile and beautifying development of the several parts. Each of these is the idea itself under a real form, and the idea is needful for its full comprehension. This unity is not made apparent, as in the philosophic thinking, by any logical or

expository process. It is felt as the soul is felt and has intuition of itself in the human body.

The poetry of Symbolic Art cannot, on account of its vague sense of the fundamental idea, realize this organic development and perfection as does Classic Art. There are too many gaps, so that the particulars preserve their separateness, or else they are rendered indistinct by the overflowing presence of the Absolute thus vaguely apprehended, so that the whole appears but as an enigmatical combination of traits and aspects borrowed from the moral and physical worlds,—heterogeneous elements which have among themselves but a feeble affinity.

*History* may indulge to some extent in poetic treatment. But history becomes possible only when the nomadic existence, the heroic age, has passed, and men are united by some political, social or religious bond, when life has become prosaic. Only occasionally are there heroic situations, sparkling eminences amid the general level, which may be poetically treated. But the historian cannot neglect the prosaic flow, and these flights are only episodic. This historic unity, therefore, is something less profound than the philosophic or the poetic, and does not descend to the ultimate depths to deal with first principles, and seek to reveal the divine plan, the secret harmony of the universe.

The efforts of *Eloquence*, too, may be capable of artistic excellence, and appear as the productions of a mind entirely free; but the purpose of the orator is not to produce anything true or beautiful in itself,



but to convince, to persuade, to move and stimulate others: thus it is practical and not contemplative. These orations may be full of beautiful images, and give evidence of the poetic mind, and arouse similar excitation in others: they may be even prose poems to be recited or read, but so far they depart from the proper purpose of Oratory, and can never produce the perfect and everlasting result of the proper poetic Art. Poetry, by trenching upon the domain of Oratory, only becomes prosaic, and the versifier who would instruct or convince has simply mistaken his form. He makes his art only a means. The versified productions narrating with sparkling animation some striking event are true lyrics, and the lyric poet may sometimes lift himself above the level of his order, and produce an Epic or a Drama in miniature, giving his work isolation and completeness.

Genius, talent, inspiration, originality are needed for the poet, but his Art requires some modification of the same. The Architect, Sculptor or Painter is limited by his material, and must have special skill in dealing with it. The poet, too, must have the rhythmical ear, and a vocabulary of words sufficiently large to bring out the resources of his language. He may seem to have fewer technical difficulties to vanquish, and hence the number of those who can versify is greater than of those who can mould, draw or paint; but the higher excellences of the Art are quite as difficult to attain, and need talent inborn, or laboriously acquired. Besides, the poet has prob-

lems to solve which do not fall to any other artist. He finds himself upon the same ground where moves already prosaic, scientific or religious thought, and he is to keep himself separate from these and not borrow their methods. And since his Art permits him to penetrate farther into the mysterious depths of existence, he has need of wider and more accurate and thorough knowledge than the other Artists. And to have full possession of himself he ought to be unfettered by practical necessities, and be able to contemplate the world with an eye calm and free. Unquestionably the perfection of the work of the poet has been impaired by sordid cares and any alien occupation whatever. Hence in youth, before the soul has become drawn into the currents of life and its multitudinous necessities, wooing it away into the realm of the practical, the poetic impulse is most strong and genial, and its productions are more abundant; yet the older poet has acquired knowledge, skill and mastery which the youth does not possess, and his work, notwithstanding the disturbance in his soul made by the imperious needs of life, and though his inspiration may be less ardent, yet is more perfect, and may continue to increase in worth till the period of decadence, all unsuspected by him, comes, and subtly loosens the firm brain, and interposes its period of weariness.

The proper material for the poetic Art is, as we have seen, the mental representations suggested by the words, the arbitrary signs. It does not deal with these as abstract, but as concrete; hence it may

seek not only, or not so much, to clarify and make precise, as to illumine and bring out their rich and hidden content. In ordinary logical speech one comprehends at once the meaning, while the poet's meaning is only reached by its dwelling in the light of imagination, and stimulating that faculty in others to similar activity. When one says: "The sun is about to rise, as I see by the color in the east," I understand it, but this is not poetic. When it is said —

"The East begins to smile at his approach  
And spread her rosy signals to the sky,"

we have the same thought in the garb of a poetic image. The first effect which results from this mode of expression is to make the dull thought living, and to interest us thereby. In another sort of expression the figure is less intimately married to the object. It introduces a second object, in order to make the first more sensible,—as when Homer compares Ajax, when he will not fly, to an obstinate ass,—or to please us with the parallelism or correspondence between things moving on different planes. When, however, the comparison is too prolonged or too minute, the thought becomes dissipated and loses life and force. Since, too, the procedures of poetic and prosaic thinking are perpetually intermingled in the same mind, it becomes difficult to proportion and adjust them. The means by which this Art avoids the Scylla of the prosaic and the Charybdis jumble of images consists in its mastery over words, by its inventing figurative expressions which tell much in

little, and avoid the complications of the metaphor, and the dissipation of the vigor of the thought. Even this tendency, however, may be carried too far, and the pomp and glitter of words conceal poverty of thought, for the void beneath is sure to be detected. And others again, from imperfect mastery of the resources of language, may be unable to give their thought clear and effective expression, though, could it be brought out, it would be intensely poetic.

The requirements of versification are not for this Art a yoke and a hindrance, but a help. The necessity to search here and there for an expression which his verse requires gives to the poet new suggestions and discoveries which, without this need, would not be reached. And the requirements of sound, its harmony and sweetness, temper the seriousness of his thought.

Hegel next gives a treatise on versification, not dissimilar to the usual treatment, noting the excellences of rhythmical verse, reaching the highest in Greek Poetry, and of rhyme, whose resources have been most fully developed in modern times, but saying nothing of English blank verse, which exceeds either of the above in its capacity for complicated and subtle harmonies.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### EPIC POETRY.

THE usual and correct division of Poetry is into the *Epic*, the *Lyric*, and the *Dramatic*.

The Epos is a recital in which the event is so recounted as to be confounded and identified with the discourse itself. For this it is needful that the basis of the recital should be an independent fact, complete in itself, and the discourse should display it entirely in the whole extent of its development.

The simplest mode of Epic representation consists in disengaging from the real world and the multitude of its passing manifestations something substantial, independent and necessary, and expressing it laconically. The *Epigram* is such a mode. The *Gnome*, or moral maxim, is such. What constitutes the Epic character of these is, that they are not the personal sentiments or reflections of the individual. The ancient Greek *Elegy* has this Epic tone, and the "Golden Verses" which bear the name of Pythagoras. Such maxims may abandon their fragmentary form, and be co-ordinated in a whole, which then has the Epic nature, for it is not a simple lyric sentiment nor a dramatic action, but a real and determined circle of life revealed to the conscience. Such productions have a didactic tone, yet by their fresh



intuitions, their *nüiveté*, and felicitous expressions, are something else than the mere reflective didactic. But, instead of these, Poetry may take for its subject some particular domain of nature, or of human existence, in order to offer to the imagination in harmonious and concise language some eternal idea, thus treating philosophic thought in a poetic manner. Of this kind are the poems of Xenophanes and Parmenides, and the ancient Cosmogonies and Theogonies. The poem of Parmenides is an exposition of the Eleatic philosophy, and its idea is, the absolute unity which, in face of the transitory existence and changing phenomena of nature, appears as the immutable and eternal element. Nothing satisfies more the mind which seeks with ardor the truth than this conception of the eternal substance in its abstract and universal unity. Inspired and dilated by the grandeur of this object, and striving with its limitless power, the soul abandons itself to this lofty flight, and thought takes easily a poetic turn. So, too, in the Cosmogonies, where the poetic imagination, dealing with the genesis of existence, personifies the forces and phenomena of nature; and in the Theogonies, as in the Greek, where the interference of the race of Jupiter allays the strife of the natural powers, and harmonizes them into order.

Nevertheless, this kind of Epos is wanting in poetic unity. These actions and events are but a necessary succession of facts and incidents, and not an individual action which springs from a center and finds its unity in itself. Besides, the subject does not

embrace the world in its totality, since human activity is wanting. This alone can furnish a real and living occasion for the action of the divine potencies.

The Epos proper is free from these defects. Its subject is some past action, some event which, in the vast reach of its circumstances, and the multitude and interest of its relations, embraces an entire world; the life of a nation, or the entire history of an epoch. The totality of the beliefs of a people, religious and other, its spirit developed in the form of a real event, which is its living picture, this is the idea and the form of the Epos. All this is vivified by its close connection with the actions and the character of personages. Such a subject should be developed in a calm and leisurely manner, without pressing upon itself like dramatic action, and hastening on to its *dénouement*. We must be able to contemplate the march of events, and to linger over and enjoy the details and episodes; nevertheless it should not be fragmentary. Its unity should never be lost sight of, and it should be an organic whole. It becomes thus the Bible for a people, though not all Bibles are Epics. The Old Testament and the Koran are not, though the former contains portions of an Epic kind. But the Greek Bible was the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the Indian the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.

The Epic poem belongs to a period between the slumber of barbarism and the more civilized order, the interval when individual thought has not yet been concentrated into maxims. When the prin-

ciples which should govern human conduct do not emanate directly from the conscience, but are an external code, of various origin, and life in general has become thereby more prosaic, then the poetic impulse struggles to escape from these fetters, and to create for itself a distinct and independent world. Then the Lyric and the Drama find their stimulus. But in the heroic age, the true cradle of the Epos, it by no means follows that a people possesses the art to express itself poetically. The habit and skill of expression must have been acquired by culture and reflection. Homer wrote long after the Trojan war. But the age in which the Epos is written must not be so far separated from the one furnishing the subject, that no sympathy exists between them. If so, the performance seems artificial. Homer's world is still essentially Greek; while in Virgil we are perpetually reminded that *his* world is different from that he represents. But on account of the objective character of the Epos, the personality of the poet should disappear in his treatment; the poem should seem to sing itself.

For the Epos, the complex relations of the fixed social life are not suited. The connection should be more direct between action and the animating principle. So, too, the connection of man with external nature must not be artificial, but preserve its primitive and immediate character. Its heroes build their own houses and their vessels, and forge their own arms, and slay their own oxen, and prepare their own food. Man has not yet broken his close

connection with nature, and interposed a complex machinery between it and himself. This gives to the personages their free individuality. Social and political connections are still loose and in process of formation. Agamemnon is no monarch, but only for the occasion a leader. The subordination of others is still free, and may at any time be declined, as by Achilles.

The Epic treatment differs from the Dramatic. In the latter, the character creates his destiny for himself. In the former, this destiny is the result of exterior forces. Man submits to the fatal and necessary order, which may or may not be in harmony with him. But this seeming fatality is but a higher kind of justice. [Destiny works its purpose relentlessly, but it has its own secret method and law, and derives from and results in a harmony more profound than individual men can aim at or accomplish.] But this gives to the Epic movement a tone of sadness.

[In his treatment of the Epic Poem, Hegel's method has been quite as much *a posteriori* as *a priori*, i.e., he adopts Homer's Iliad as the realized ideal of the Epic Poem, and draws his rules for the Epic in general from an inspection of that; rather than deduces from admitted premises absolute rules, to which the Iliad is found to be most conformable. The success and immortality of this poem derives, indeed, from the observance of these laws, which are shown to have rationality; but it cannot be inferred that another Epic Poem might not have been, or

might not yet be, produced, which on examination would be found to make its own law not identical with that of the Iliad. Dante's *Divina Commedia* cannot be made to fit this mould, and must be judged by its own law.]

The *Idyll* and the *Romance* have the Epic rather than the Lyric or Dramatic character; the *Idyll* represents man still in his primitive, and society in its formative, stages. Human nature is represented as rising out of its animal rudeness, and full of the gaiety which is nothing else than the spiritual element gradually refining itself. The *Romance* is the Epic of the *Bourgeoisie*, and the sole kind that can be made, perhaps, in our modern and prosaic condition of society. It cannot be pure poetry, but derives its chief interest from the conflict between the poetry of the heart and the opposing prose of the social relations and the hazard of circumstances; and this discord can be treated either tragically or comically. But a romance has excellence and artistic worth, in so far as it preserves the conditions for the unity amid variety which belongs to the true Epic.

Here follows, in Hegel's work, a notice, characterization and criticism of the Epics of all times and nations, which we must omit.



## CHAPTER IX.

### LYRIC POETRY.

IN the Epic, the poet effaces himself in his work, in the Lyric he draws all things to himself, penetrates them with his feeling, and lets them issue forth again, thus subjectified; but the utterance must still be the result of the poetic and not of the prosaic outlook. The subjects for Lyric poetry are numberless, and unlimited by time or place. By the charm of expression it can give life and interest to almost anything. But the power to do this can only come from the poetic soul, able to range freely above the limitations of the prosaic life.

Lyric Poetry may found itself upon an Epic event, and take the form of a recital, as in the *Ballads*, yet preserve its own fundamental tone, since the poet still seeks to arouse in his auditor his own sentiment. When the Epigram expresses any personal sentiment, it is, so far, Lyric. And this treatment may show itself in the Romance. But the Lyric poet is not bound to any text. He need record the movements of his own soul only, or he may metamorphose himself into that which he describes, like an actor playing different rôles. In uttering the playful movement of his own soul, it is not needful that what he says should have much sense. The logical

mind may be satisfied by the mere thread of connection and grammatical accuracy. He may marry the slenderest thought or most vagrant feeling to subtle and mysterious sound, [as in some poems of Edgar Poe, and in the Songs of Shakespeare.]

These ramifications and refinements of emotion belong rather to the fully formed and organized condition of society, when in the security of fixed institutions there is leisure for the free flights of fancy, and when there is a larger round of situations occasioned by the complex artificial life. Thus each rank furnishes its own class of topics, and we have Lyrics of the natural, the popular, the national, the cultured, and the fashionable life. The popular or the national Lyric so far resembles the Epic, in that the poet effaces himself in his subject. It is the common feeling, of which he is the mouthpiece, rather than his own, that he seeks to make common. The popular song seems to sing itself. It is the cry of nature escaping from the heart. But Art, in the strictness of its definition, is not at the mercy of any wave of feeling. It is free and has conscience of itself. It supposes that the artist knows and wills what he is to produce. Hence he must have had a preliminary culture, and an acquired skill in execution. So only do Lyrics become true works of Art. The popular Lyric is, for the most part, anterior to the prosaic period. The artistic Lyric is subsequent, and finds the prose of life in full vigor, and struggles with it and mounts above it. There may be the philosophic Lyric, in which the clarity of the expo-

sition of thought is not obscured, but has life given to it by imagery and the warmth of sentiment.

The Lyric poem should possess unity,—not the objective unity of the Epic, but the subjective one of the poet's soul, some attitude of it resolutely kept; otherwise the thoughts fall into a didactic level. Besides, the Epic movement spreads itself and is slow. The Lyric movement concentrates itself and is swift. Its highest excellence is intensity of expression. But the Lyric poet is not bound to shun all episodes. He may, without losing hold of his fundamental sentiment, let himself wander hither and thither as his imagination is captivated. [When not too prolonged, these excursions rest the listening soul, as do the musical changes which glide out of and return into the essential melody.]

Lyric Poetry can be fitted to any kind of versification; but neither the hexameter, nor blank verse, is well suited to its movement, while rhyme greatly favors it; [and the metre should, usually, be suggested by the subject, and not the subject be driven into the metre arbitrarily chosen.] Hymns, Dithyrambs, Pæans, Psalms, Odes, are Lyrics of different kinds. In the *Ode*, the necessary mingling of the characteristics of the grand subjects with the subjective comments of the poet himself should guide the irregular structure. The poet shows his genius by resolving these alien elements into an artistic whole. [The transitions should not be abrupt, but natural, and the necessity for them felt beforehand.] The Song or Chant is the freest of all poetic utter-

ances. It may follow any objective or subjective changes. It may content itself with much or little thought, with thought profound or superficial. Its proper character is its *nâiveté*, the simplicity or involuntariness of its utterance. It changes with the changing history of the people among whom it is born. The poet may either express his sentiments with openness and *abandon*, or he can restrain himself, and by his very muteness make others guess what is in his heart. In the *Sonnet* or the *Elegy*, the poet is more restrained. [The ideal Sonnet is a single thought turned this way and that way, like the facets of a brilliant, yet constituting an harmonious whole. In its musical capacity it is capable of all the finest effects possible for versification.]

There is no branch of Art where the peculiarities of the nationality or the epoch, and therefore the individuality of genius, appear so marked as in Lyric Poetry. But these particularities are still susceptible of the classification into the Symbolic, the Classic, and the Romantic. As in the other arts, the Oriental Lyric exhibits the personal consciousness absorbed in the contemplation of nature, before which it bows as representing the potency and the substance of all phenomena. It strives to possess and understand this, but without success. It thus possesses a more objective quality than the Lyric of the Occident. It issues, as to its expression, in a naïve expansion, where the imagination loses itself easily, without reaching a positive and clear expression, because its object is the Infinite Being, which cannot be repre-

sented by images. Thus the Lyric Poetry of the Hebrews, Arabians and Persians has a kind of hymnic elevation. What is wanting to the Lyric sentiment in its interior and living liberty is replaced by the liberty and wealth of expression. We find prolonged comparisons upon which the imagination ventures with incredible hardihood, producing novel and surprising combinations. In the Classic Lyric, the inner sentiment, instead of this symbolic vagueness, is clear and precise in its conception, and its expression.

The Greek Hymns, like their statues, give to their divinities fixed and sensible traits. The Roman Lyric is less spontaneous, and more reflective, and hence more subjective. In modern times the Lyric having a wider field, a larger past, and a more complex present, strays over a vast variety of subjects, becomes more intensely subjective, and tries all expedients of versification and modes of expression. Its varieties are too numerous to admit of classification.



## CHAPTER X.

### DRAMATIC POETRY.

THE Drama offers us the most complete reunion of all the characteristics of the Poetic Art. Like the Epos, it exposes a complete action as accomplished before our eyes, and whatever is done appears to emanate from the passions and the will of the personages who develop it. Its result is decided by the essential nature of the designs which they pursue, of their character and the collisions in which they are engaged. The Drama cannot confine itself to describing the external side of things. It deals with the human souls who are in movement. The expression of these is not only by words, but by gestures, motions, and the variations of the countenance. Hence the Dramatic Art, when perfect, includes the Histrionic. Independently of this latter, and viewing only the properly poetic side, we may consider (1) the general principles of Dramatic Poetry, (2) the particular characters of a Drama, and (3) its relation to the public.

The Drama is not a mere representation of an enterprise which peaceably runs its course. It has interest only from the animated strife between its personages and their struggle with obstacles and perils. It gives us the final result of these conflicts,

conducting us out of their tumult into repose. It is later in origin than the Epic or the Lyric. It is the product of a civilization already advanced, and supposes the days of the primitive Epos to be past, and that the Lyric has already existed, since it makes use of this. In the Epic the personal will is at the mercy of destiny; in the Lyric, the personal consciousness asserts its independence. If the Drama is to unite these two characteristics, it must be under the following conditions:

The action it selects is not a physical but a *moral* one. The event is not forced by external circumstances, but comes from the living will. Through this it is drawn into collision with other wills. This perpetual relation of the events with the characters is the principle of Dramatic Poetry. Whatever results to the hero is the fruit of his own acts. [To rest for awhile in order to exhibit the pathetic situation with lyrical latitude is a permission that, if allowed, must be economically made use of by the dramatic poet. The soliloquies of the Drama have interest, not as lamentations or rhapsodies, but as giving the swift inner movement of the soul, explaining itself to itself, or about to change its attitude toward the other souls.] In this respect the Drama is simpler than the Epos. It has not for basis an entire world, ramified in all its parts, but only a smaller number of determined circumstances in the midst of which its personages march on directly to their end. A larger development of character than that arising from the particular circumstances would

be superfluous, and dissipate the interest. Such human relations must be selected as admit of *collisions*. The motives of these oppositions are, however, the moral powers, and the issue of these conflicts is determined by the eternal laws.

The Dramatic poem must have unity. The close coördination of its parts is objective, because the events in their flow do not violate the natural order, and descend into improbability; and subjective, because the end pursued appears as a personal passion.

In Dramatic diction, we find both the *natural* and the conventional or declamatory. The first Goethe and Schiller in their youth affected, but they abandoned it later for a loftier diction. The natural tone is usually prosaic; to become poetic, language must be lifted to an ideal sphere. In acquiring intensity the relations of the words become other than the common ones. But this style can become too stilted and artificial.

If the Drama is to be *represented*, regard must be had to its audience. The poet, however, may write over their heads even when he profoundly interests them. He may captivate the common heart, yet have a reserve of meaning only to be reached by study. Almost all the great dramas were written with regard to the requirements of theatrical representation, and, no doubt, by this a more intense effect has been produced upon the solitary reader. When written for such alone, a milder effect is intended.

In all the kinds of Dramatic Poetry there is the

same basis; on the one side, the good, the true, the Divine; on the other, the arbitrary will of the disordered personality, which together make possible the contradictions and vindications. In Tragedy especially, the basis is the legitimate powers, which influence the human will, the family affections, the proper interests of real life, patriotism, and the religious sentiment, not as mystic, but as active zeal. These motives constitute the moral goodness of the true tragic characters. They are what they can be, and ought to be, according to their idea. They represent *that* in the character which is part of the legitimate constitution of human society. These are not the accidents of individuality. The tragic heroes represent more elevated motives, which have in themselves absolute worth. Yet these same moral powers existing in different intensity in individual souls, and the results of human action being perceived with different degrees of clearness, collisions become possible. Of two personages, in the true Tragedy, each is represented as [subjectively] *in the right*. But not being able to realize what seems to him to be such without violation of another power, will, and end equally just, the hero, notwithstanding his morality, or, rather, on account of it, is drawn to commit faults. This contradiction must be destroyed, and a solution of this conflict be brought about, eternal justice be exercised, and moral unity be re-established by the destruction, if need be, of what has troubled its repose. Thus the real combat is not so much between particular interests, as be-

tween the moral reason in its pure idea, on the one hand, and, on the other, its concrete manifestation in the real world, and in human activity. This idea is the harmonizing principle, and whatever has exclusive particularity must be accommodated to it. But the tragic personage, not being able to renounce his projects, finds himself condemned to total ruin, or at least is forced to resign himself, as he can, to his destiny.

[If this be true, it is an illustration of the instinct of the Tragic poets, who thus anticipate the conclusions of moral science, and furnish a commentary beforehand. The *principle* of all moral action is the same, but in applying it to concrete situations obscurity and conflict are inevitable; seeing that *duty*, in these collisions, and in all perplexities of moral meditation, is relative to some ideal aspect of the human world, which, the more it is pondered, retires farther and farther off. Each is in dead earnest, and the principle to harmonize the differing views is not at hand. Christianity supplies such a principle; and so must the true, clear and perfect ethic itself. Hence in Christian lands, and in the light of true and complete culture, tragic situations are fewer; and this may be one reason why in modern times Tragedy is so seldom chosen by poets, or why it is so rarely successful. When it is chosen, the conflict is with the good and the bad, rather than with the different subjectivities of the good.]

Under this relation Aristotle was right in making the true effect of Tragedy to consist in exciting



terror and pity, yet purifying these emotions. What man really ought to dread is not the physical oppression, which ends at least with life, but the moral principle which lies behind the physical powers, in which alone the reason finds satisfaction. Pity may be something profounder than mere sympathy with suffering (which implies an imaginative substitution of one's self for the object pitied); it may be something more purely rational,—recognition of the justice of the cause, and the moral rectitude of him who suffers, and sympathy with him accordingly. The Tragic character, to excite this profound compassion, must have right aims, even though issuing in mistaken judgments. And the true Tragic interest is sustained and satisfied only when we are allowed to see the Eternal Justice harmonizing, even destructively, these moral powers. Thus the substantial principle of the universe appears victorious in its inner harmony. It destroys, indeed, the exclusive side of these individuals, but brings their profound and essential relations into accord. It is otherwise in *Comedy*. Here the personality or subjectivity appears as maintaining itself in security. What amuses us in the personages who jostle each other is the complacency both of victors and vanquished. The arena suitable for Comedy is a world where individual purposes destroy each other because they have not a true and solid base. But not all action is comic because it is vain and false. The merely *risible* is not the *Comic*. Any contrast between idea and form, between end and means, may be

made risible. Almost anything can be so treated as to be risible to some tastes. Laughter is a kind of self-complacency, in which we feel ourselves so wise as to comprehend, and thus be outside the net of this contrast. The true *Comic*, on the contrary, is the infinite satisfaction which the character himself experiences to have lifted himself out of this contradiction, in which the person, sure of himself, shows that he can bear to behold his projects and their realization destroyed. The characters of Comedy must not be pure abstractions, as avarice, etc. If the person absorbs himself, and seriously, in some such end, the essence of the Comic is wanting. The true Comic emerges when the designs, in themselves little and null, are pursued with the appearance of great seriousness; but when failure comes, the person does not perish, but subsides, resigned to his fall, into his own free serenity. A contrary situation, but equally comic, appears when the personages endeavor to compass an important end, but show themselves incompetent, or when the situations are so complicated and extraordinary, that they are too much for the character, and all falls into a ridiculous dissipation. Thus the Comic demands a *dénouement* more imperiously even than the Tragic; but that which is in the end destroyed is not the True in itself, nor the subjective and personal element. Reason is not satisfied if the True is left liable to permanent derangement. It must emerge into the light again, and assert its own absoluteness. Neither must the subjectivity be dissipated, but rest in the

end inviolable, notwithstanding the momentary contradiction.

The *Drama* holds a middle place between Tragedy and Comedy, containing elements of each. It is more flexible, and hence more liable to depart from the purely dramatic type, and to fall into the prosaic. Much of our modern Drama is without poetic interest.


There have been epochs also in the historic development of Dramatic poetry. Oriental life has not been favorable to it. Where the principle of fatality reigns, individuals cannot vindicate their rights as dramatic action exacts. In what purport to be Dramas, among the Indians and Chinese, we have a simple personification of events and sentiments imagined and adjusted to the situations which are presented in the real life. The true commencement of dramatic poetry was with the Greeks, for here first the principle of free individuality appeared, and rendered possible the Classic form of Art. In the Greek Drama the interest turns upon the general elevated character of the ends which the personages pursue. Even in the Comedy, it is the general and public interests which are represented, rather than the particular ones of individuals. It is still the strife of moral powers. These comic figures manifest the general corruption, and the causes which were perverting the social constitution, and sapping the foundations of the State. In the modern Drama, on the contrary, it is the personal passion which is the principal object, the development of the character under special relations. The interest, therefore, con-

sists in the grandeur of the characters. These show that they are superior to their situations and their actions, and if, by the tyranny of circumstances and the complications of life, these rich natures cannot display all the treasures which they contain, or if they find themselves disappointed and shattered, they still preserve their harmony in their greatness. Love, ambition, etc., furnish the principal motives, and crime is not excluded. But in dealing with this last, there is a rock difficult to steer clear of, for the criminal in himself, when his character is feeble or naturally vile, offers but a disgusting spectacle. Here, to be interesting, unusual will-force must be present to redeem the character and to captivate the imagination; æsthetic, if not moral, interest must be aroused. The crowd of particular incidents of which the modern Drama makes use, ought, to excite a poetic interest, to have some rule, and to be bound together by some well-known law of Providence, and the collisions should not be meaningless.

In the Greek Tragedy, whose scenes are laid in the heroic age, we have, on the one side, the conflict of wills and the strife of passions, and, on the other, the meditative consciousness which preserves its serenity. The first is represented by the characters, the last by the *Chorus*. This serves to preserve the steadiness of serene and true thought in the audience. It represents the immutable element, while the characters exhibit the transitory one of the human story. It is the moral conscience commenting on what is passing. It belongs essentially to that epoch when

any established jurisdiction or formulated dogmas have not yet become potent and regulative, when manners appear yet in untroubled *nâiveté*, and yet when the equilibrium of social life rests sufficiently guaranteed against the terrible collisions into which the energy of the heroic characters has drawn it. That such an asylum still exists the chorus makes to be felt. It takes no part in the action, does not exert itself for or against the personages; but emits its judgments in a manner purely contemplative. In its form of expression it is Lyric, yet preserves its Epic character in the general and substantial truth of its utterances. In the modern Tragedy the chorus is not in its proper place, because the actions do not depend upon a similarly substantial basis, but upon the will of the individual characters, and the seeming hazard of circumstances. Whatever was its origin, the Greek Chorus purified and maintained itself in this profound significance in the most flourishing period of the Greek Drama; and the decadence of Tragedy was seen when the Chorus descended from this lofty function, and became a mere accessory or indifferent ornament. It fell out of use in the middle age, for it was not adapted to the times of royalty and chivalry. The people then played a very different rôle, and was degraded into something merely obedient, and no longer represented the general conscience.

According to the idea of the Greek Tragedy above given, it is evident that its circle of subjects cannot be very extended, as is the field for the modern





Drama; [and, perhaps, had all the Greek Tragedies come down to us, we should have found its capabilities well-nigh exhausted, and that it must, of necessity, have undergone a change, or exhibited the tokens of transition.]

As for the *dénouement* of tragic action, it is evident that in these opposing rights and resolves, which we have seen are equally legitimate, one or the other must perish. But that which is to be destroyed is solely their exclusive character. Their interior harmony must appear at the termination of the conflict, unalterable, like that which is represented by the Chorus. It is not misfortune or suffering to awaken sympathy, but satisfaction for the moral mind, which is the end aimed at. There must be revealed to these very conflicting personages the necessity of that which has arrived, as if it had been ordered by a superior mind. Thus only does the listening soul, after this tumult, find peace. It is not the commonplace solution of crime punished, or virtue rewarded, but a result which exhibits an essential accord, and equal worth in the two powers which have been in combat. Nor is it a Fate, a blind destiny which triumphs. It is a Providence, rather, full of intelligence, [and so far in harmony with our reason, as far as this can see, that there is produced in us a faith in the reasonableness of that which we do not see.] This conciliation in the Tragedy is to be distinguished from that of the Epos. In the latter the Nemesis is the ancient Justice which abases all that has lifted itself in opposition, and establishes

the equilibrium of felicity and misery needed to carry on the machinery of the world; while the Tragic conciliation is the return of the moral powers, which have been in opposition, to their essential harmony. Thus, sometimes the personage who has identified himself completely with the exclusive passion must be sacrificed; and sometimes the principal hero may abandon his exclusive determination, but this he can only do, and preserve his plastic character, when by the command or in the presence of a loftier intelligence, of the God. Or there may be an internal conciliation in the mind of the hero, as in the *Edipus*. In this we find a resemblance to the mode of the modern Drama, and are reminded of the Christian hero, who expiates his fault by his death, and finds in that transition his rest and felicity.

The Greek Comedy, as exhibited by Aristophanes, deals chiefly with the inferior conditions of society, and with simple men; or if introducing more elevated ones, exhibits them as only transiently descending into the common arena, and loosely bound by the interests they find there. The internal serenity and good humor of the character is never lost, no matter how riotous the ridicule. That calmness of soul which is the *terminus* in Tragedy is the starting-point in the Comedy, and is temporarily agitated only to be regained.

In the modern Tragedy, for the most part, since its principle is the subjective personality, we find the collisions made not by the moral powers, but by seemingly exterior accidents, which decide, or appear

to decide, the *dénouements*. Not that, however, the actions of men truly dignified are wanting in any solid basis. They grow out of the domain of the real life, yet their motives are higher than its caprices, or its sordid needs. The principle of personality has created a multitude of relations and rights unknown to the Classic world, among which the Romantic personages find themselves placed, and which allow them to act variantly; so that the conflict appears not necessary, but arbitrary, and depends upon their characters. These in the course of the action are developed, not in virtue of any legitimate principle they represent and defend, but in order to continue faithful to themselves. Here, indeed, the morality of the end and that of the character may often find themselves in accordance, but this does not constitute the essential basis of the interest. Under these conditions, characters more numerous and various can be exhibited. Yet triumph, here, is only to be found in the English Drama, and in Shakespeare especially. The characters of French or Italian Tragedies are rather of an abstract simplicity, personifications of definite passions. The same is true of the Spanish Drama, though its figures are distinguished by a kind of concentration, and by the immense variety of their interesting situations. But the English Drama, in Shakespeare, gives us characters perfectly human. Even when the passion is something purely personal, as ambition in *Macbeth*, or jealousy [or pity] in *Othello*, it does not violate their individuality, and all its violence does not hinder their being

complete men. Even when Shakespeare, in the infinite variety of his theatrical world, goes to the extremes of perversity or folly, far from leaving his figures devoid of poetic *prestige*, and absorbed in the narrowness of their ideas, he gives them so much the more spirit and imagination, so that they become poetic creatures and artists of themselves. When it is needed, his serious characters have an elevation and an energy so striking; their language evinces a sensibility so profound and an imagination so brilliant; their illustrations spring so spontaneously from their mouths, as the eloquence not of the school but of the heart, and as the expansion of the character itself; that, because of this alliance of vitality and internal greatness, no Dramatic poet among the moderns can be compared with him. Goethe, though aiming at it, could not reach this deep energy and this elevated character of passion; and Schiller resorted to a violence of expression whose impetuous expansion lacked often any true vigor. Modern characters allow of indecision and irresolution, which arise from deeper and larger reflection, as in the case of Hamlet, or when the changes of mind are the result of natural character, as in Lear and Gloster.

In the *dénouement* of modern Tragedy, the eternal justice which conciliates is revealed less clearly than in the ancient. We find ourselves, in our deeper view of Providence, puzzled to penetrate the meaning of the destiny, and are obliged to rest satisfied with seeing retribution for crime, as in Macbeth, and in Regan and Goneril, or with the trusting faith that

there is method and meaning in the vicissitudes of terrestrial things. In the deaths of Hamlet or Juliet we can see no other possible termination, and resign ourselves, not shocked, but still sad. The modern Comedy, too, differs similarly from the ancient. Aristophanes seeks to make his characters comical in each others' eyes, while the modern Comedy regards chiefly the audience. This is true even in Molière, whose disappointed personages are by no means satisfied with results. Yet the compensation is to be found in the skill in designing characters, and developing an intrigue. And modern Comedy can become truly poetic when the good humor and careless gaiety, notwithstanding the misadventures, and the faults committed, constitute the principal tone, [for this external ebulliance and untroubled sweetness is one aspect of the poetic ideal, and is itself symbolical of the profounder joy of the perfect life. Here again there has been no success so brilliant as that of Shakespeare]. The humor of Comedy, however, since it separates the true and the real, tends toward the destruction of Art.

In the conclusion of his work, Hegel says that he has been endeavoring to coördinate the idea of the Beautiful, and all the forms of Art; that in weaving this crown philosophy has found the worthiest occupation to which it could deliver itself, for in studying Art this is not a mere amusing plaything, or a useful instrument with which we have to do, but is rather the attempted deliverance of the mind from the trammels of finite existence, and the manifesta-



tion and the harmony of the Absolute under sensible forms, and thus it becomes the best recompense for the rude travail to which man is condemned in the order of science and knowledge.

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[The result of the author's painstaking has been to show that the eternal idea of the Beautiful has haunted the human race, and that man has been perpetually seeking to solace himself with the imaginative representation of that from which the reality falls so far short; that this endeavor comes from the primal *impetus* which started our race in its career to create itself as a commonwealth, and for itself a world truly beautiful; no matter what be the sublime and pathetic periods through which it must pass to reach that consoling and satisfying end.]





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